

ERITREA-CHINA COOPERATION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR



A reception ceremony was held yesterday at Asmara Palace Hotel to welcome the new, 16th Round, Chinese Medical Team and bid farewell to the 18-member preceding group.

During a keynote Address at the event, Mrs. Amina Nurhusein, Minister of Health, noted that the exemplary medical cooperation between the two countries is anchored on and reflects solid bilateral ties.

Indicating that the cooperation

between Eritrea and China in the health sector has been going on for the last 25 years, Minister Amina said that so far over 200 Chinese medical professionals have done medical service in Eritrea.

The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Cai Ge on his part said that the cooperation between Eritrea and China is based on mutual partnership and cooperation and that has been very successful.

Ambassador Cai Ge also

expressed readiness to support the Chinese medical group in all their endeavors during their stay in Eritrea.

The leader of the outgoing Chinese Medical Team on his part commended the support provided by the Ministry of Health during their stay in Eritrea for 14 months.

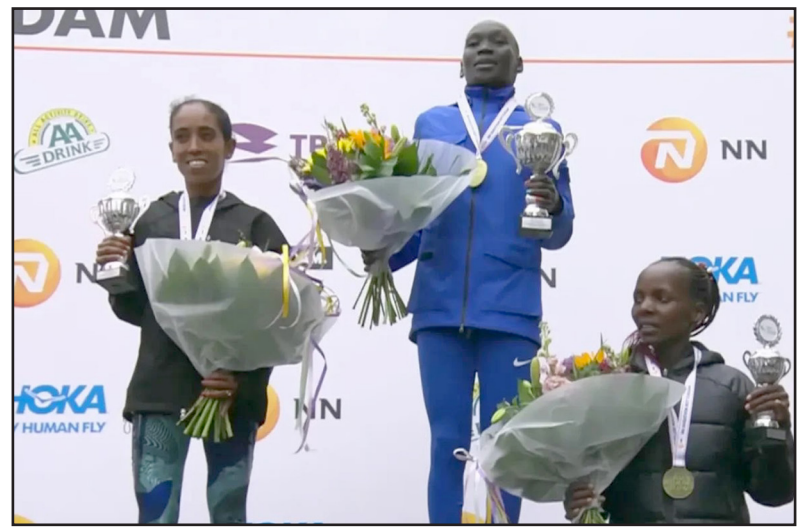
ERITREAN ATHLETES STAGE OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Eritrean Olympian Athlete Dolshi Tesfu has clinched a Silver Medal at the Rotterdam Marathon that was held on 16 April in the Netherlands.

Athlete Dolshi finished the race in an astounding 2 hours, 21 minutes, and 35 seconds time following the Bahraini athlete Eunice Chebichii Chumba, who finished around one minute ahead.

Meanwhile, on 17 April, Eritrean Olympian Athlete Nazreth Woldu finished sixth at the Boston Marathon, one of the six major marathons in the world.

Both these outstanding athletes will be participating at the 2023 World Athletics Championships which will be held in Budapest, Hungary, from 19 August to 27 August.



PUBLIC HEALTH MEETING IN AKORDET

A meeting focusing on mother and child health care was organized in Akordet in the Gash Braka region.

At the meeting in which public representatives and sub-zone administrators of Akordet and Mensura took part, members of the Ministry of Health presented report on the objective situation in the effort to deliver health service particularly focusing on mothers and children.

According to the reports presented traditional way of delivery is still being practices in

some parts of the sub-zones and called for reinforced effort on the part of the administrations and the public to encourage pregnant women deliver at health facilities with a view to reduce death of mothers and infants due to delivery.

Ms. Yihdega Yohannes, head of the National Union of Eritrean Women in the region on her part called for integrated effort of all partners to strengthen participation in the effort to raise the understanding of the public in general and that of women in particular on the importance of delivering at health facilities for

ensuring the safety of mothers and children.

Speaking at event, Mr. Osman Mohammed-Ali, chairman of the assembly, called for conducting sustainable awareness raising activities to develop the understanding of the public on health issues and to encourage pregnant women deliver at health facilities.

The participants on their part commending for organizing the meeting with a view to develop their understanding on health issues called for its sustainability.

ANSEBA REGION YOUTH SEMINARS

Seminars were convened in the 9 sub-zones of Anseba region with secondary school students and youth workers as well as the students of Hagaz Agricultural and Technical College.

The seminars conducted by Mr. Saleh Ibrahim, Head of PFDJ in the region, focused on the current state of affairs in the country and role of the youth, strengthening participation of the youth in popular campaigns and development programs, ethics of students, addictions and their consequences, strengthening relations between parents, students and teachers as well as clean and efficient service at work place.

At the seminar conducted to students of Hagaz Agricultural and Technical College, Mr. Saleh called on the students to take advantage of the educational opportunity being provided and earnestly work to change the traditional way of farming to modern one.

Mr. Ahmed-Nur Humed, head of Political and Organizational Affairs at the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students branch in the region, on his part called on the students to concentrate on their education and the concerned institutions to play due part in the overall development of the youth.

Indicating that the seminars will have significant contribution in developing their understanding on various issues, the students and youth workers called for its sustainability.



Development

National Organic Fertilizers Conference

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Marine Resources (MoMR) jointly will host a National Organic Fertilizer Conference under the theme – ‘Organic Fertilizers to Boost Safe & Nutritious Food Production!’ from 26-27, April 2023 in Asmara.

According to the Public Relations Division of the MoA, the event will cover a number of paper presentations, video and poster shows; exhibitions, as well as field visits to solid and liquid fertilizers production sites.

During the conference, senior organic agriculture and related experts from Eritrea, Germany,



Mr. Dernas Sultan

Uganda, Rwanda, Benin and representatives from FAO, ASARECA and others will present research-based papers, case studies and their practical experiences.

According to Mr. Dernas Sultan, Chairperson of the Organic fertilizers and Bio-pesticides Promotion

and restore the already affected farmlands, the focus of using yield-improving agricultural inputs has been directed towards application of organic and sustainable inputs.

Organic agricultural inputs are known to be of different types in terms of source of material, composition, and form (liquid or solid).

Among the many different types are those made from marine-based sources. According to Mr. Temesgen Gebremeskel, one of the coordinators of the conference representing the Marine Resources sector, production of liquid fish amino acid and seaweed liquid fertilizers are of the major types of organic liquid fertilizers made from marine resources.

He noted that the MoMR took an initiative to produce fish amino acid and seaweed liquid fertilizers from discarded fish and beached seaweed some years ago. Preliminary trials of the liquid fertilizers gave promising results that the Ministry approached the MoA with findings of the pilot project. Concurrently, the MoA was involved in some pilot projects to



Mr. Temesgen Gebremeskel

introduce solid organic fertilizers.

To harmonize both the initiatives, the ministries established a joint national technical committee, in February 2021, to boost the production of both solid and liquid fertilizers as well as bio-pesticides. After its establishment, the national committee has been conducting a number of trials in different agro-ecological areas of the country. According to Mr. Dernas Sultan, it is the output of these trials that gave rise to the idea of conducting a national conference with the following objectives;

- Presenting recent research

outputs and agricultural innovations with regards to organic farming

- Promoting Eritrea's achievements in the production and application of organic fertilizers

- Sharing experiences/standpoints among national, regional and international experts

- Proposing a future strategic plan on the production and use of organic inputs in a larger scale

- Promoting further collaboration among participants and organizations

- Improving public awareness on the use of organic fertilizers

During the conference, more than 130 participants which include senior government officials, representatives of UN bodies, EU, ASARECA, EIDP, VITA, and other international organizations; experts and researchers and progressive farmers are expected to attend.

**Public Relations Division
Ministry of Agriculture
15 April, 2023**



Committee, papers on Promoting Sustainable Soil Management to increase Organic Resources in Farmlands and landscapes in Sub Saharan Africa; Organic Fertilizer with Microorganisms for Regenerative Farming Made in Eritrea, Promotion of Bokashi Fermented Organic Fertilizer in Eritrea; Impact of Organic Fish Amino Acid and Seaweed Liquid Fertilizer on Plant Health and Yield; Farmers' Perspective on solid and liquid organic fertilizer; The Response of Compost on crop yield; Crop Response to Green Manure; Regulating organic fertilizer etc. are expected to shed light on the current and future prospects of organic fertilizers with in the country and at regional and global levels.

The use of chemical fertilizers to boost agricultural yield has been a key element of modern agriculture for the past few decades. However, excessive use and mismanagement of such inputs have also been causing environmental degradation, soil and water contamination, and subsequent human and animal health risks. To prevent further damage

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#AJazeera English continues to dwell on its unremitting adversity against **#Eritrea** by constantly providing airtime/space in its website to notorious & discredited detractors. Interview with Matt Bryden is latest in series of defamation. AJ is pandering to agenda of higher powers



Yemane G. Meskel @hawelti · Dec 22, 2022

#Eritrea's detractors have unscrupulously used "UN Special Rapporteurs" - from Matt Bryden to Sheila Keetharuth & the current obscure figure - for their campaigns of demonization & witch-hunting. Pliant media outlets recycled these false allegations. Time for apologies & redress!
twitter.com/tesfanews/stat...

12:31 PM · Apr 17, 2023 · 21.3K Views

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SpotLight

Renovation for Safe, Attractive, and Comfortable streets

Simon Weldemichael

Road renovation has been under way in the arterial and small streets of Asmara and its suburbs to address problems associated with aging and design that have reduced the safety, attractiveness, and comfort of roads. The renovation will help

the roadside. The old part of the city is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The need to protect and preserve these culturally and historically important buildings makes urban renovation a very demanding job.

Many Eritrean singers have paid

younger sister of London and look like Paris.”

Urbanization in Eritrea dates back to ancient times. However, it was during the Italian colonization that modern urban centers began to flourish in many parts of Eritrea. Asmara, as the capital, was planned by Italians to become an industrial town and home for Italian settlers. Under the British Military Administration, the urban infrastructure of Asmara was purposely destroyed and looted. And under Ethiopian colonial rule, the dismantling of town infrastructure became systematic and the development of Asmara and other towns in Eritrea was halted. After Eritrea gained its independence in 1991, massive reconstruction and rehabilitation projects took place for the development and effective functioning of urban centers.

Asmara's surface of paved roads have deteriorated and calls for their immediate rehabilitation are echoing everywhere. Late or insufficient maintenance can only increase the ultimate rehabilitation cost and inconvenience.

Many streets of Asmara are in need of repair. Their defects seem to have mainly stemmed from aging and the phenomenal growth of traffic. The road renovation in almost every part of the town is done by national road construction companies and is directed towards keeping a structure in a serviceable state.

The road network of Asmara has had deficiency for many years in that traffic tends to concentrate on specific streets due to the absence of a ring road. A ring road encircles a town and forms a series of connected roads. A ring road is now under construction and when completed it will help reduce traffic jams in Asmara by offering an alternative route around the city for drivers who do not need to stop or drive through the city. With the continuous development of Asmara, the number of cars has increased. It is imperative to rehabilitate the existing roads to respond to the greatly increasing traffic.

While the primary purpose of the renovation of Asmara roads is to ensure the safety and comfort of drivers and commuters, it is influenced by many factors that



need consideration such as urban planning, water and sewage lines, and electric and telephone lines. The renovation of roads in Asmara, which will continue, has already regained the hopes of its residents. And the renovated roads have already ensured safe passage for vehicles at an appropriate speed.

lighting of the streets through solar energy has made the streets of Asmara safe, attractive, and comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Safe and comfortable streets are the most basic public spaces of a city. Their renovation is an important part of improving the quality of a public space, which will help improve the



Alongside the improvement of the roads, solar panels are being installed on street lights in Asmara as a way to solve problems of high energy prices and to reduce emission of environmentally harmful gas. Eritrea is focusing on solar energy because it is cheap, sustainable, and clean energy resource.

quality of life.

Safe and comfortable urban roads are the foundation of the overall development, and they have far reaching significance to social and economic development. The renovation of the existing roads and the construction of new roads would boost the rapid development of Asmara and accelerate the process of urbanization.

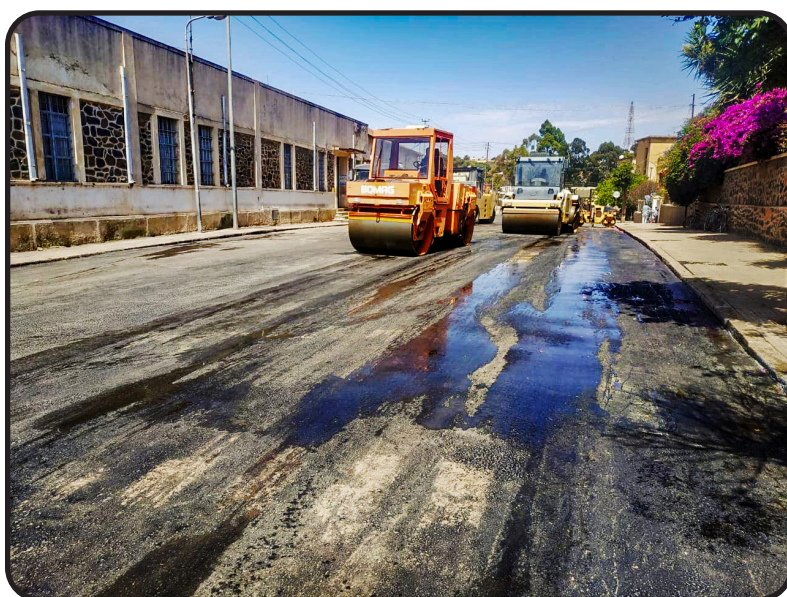
The renovation of roads and



prevent rapid deterioration of roads and contribute to the beauty and safety of the city.

Asmara, home to classical modernist architecture and its breathtaking beauty, is identified as one of Africa's most beautiful cities. Asmara roads, relatively narrow, were built during the Italian colonial period and there are many historical buildings along

tribute to the beauty of Asmara through their timeless songs. Yonus Ibrahim's song, for example, put Asmara on a par with Paris. A part of the lyrics goes, "Asmara ketema tsebiqu edlki, hadisom melki'om kulom hntsatatki, mn'as Londra n Paris mesilki," which roughly translates as "The city of Asmara, you are lucky that all your buildings have been renovated and made beautiful, you are like a





HOME

A Short Film by Nahom Abraham

Sona Berhane

A few weeks ago, Nahom Abraham won first prize at the Berlinale NEFTI Award for his short film *Home*. The NEFTI awards, a branch of the European Film Festival and sponsored by NEFT Vodka, hosts short film competitions annually.

This year's finalists were selected by a panel of judges that included Hollywood actress, producer, and television host Vivica A. Fox, Oscar-winning producer Bruce Cohen and Disney president Ted Gagliano, along with last year's winner Minenhle Luthuli.

The NEFTI awards are a platform created to provide opportunities for filmmakers from less-known regions. In return, the filmmakers are required to feature the vodka brand in their films and to make the content of their films non-violent and non-political.

Home is written, directed and produced by Nahom. It is a drama about a long-distance couple who long to be reunited. That's it. There is no elaborate, complicated plot. And yet, it won top prize beating countless other contestants. This article attempts to identify what makes *Home* so impactful.

Directing actors on set involves more than just having them perform in character. It entails deciding how they move within the frame, because much of a character is revealed by his/her body language. Directing also includes being very careful about set design. In filmmaking, the staging of the set and character placement in it is known as blocking.

In a film form that limits expositional dialogue to the minimum, Nahom relies on efficient use of visual and auditory subtext to tell his story. The scenes in the film are succinct, lingering only when they need to (and even then, when there is an absence of verbal communication). The dialogue

itself is concise but expressive.

During the four-minute run time, the viewer's attention is subtly directed using three cinematographic storytelling devices: metaphor, contrast, and sound.

Let's start with sound. In the very first scene, before we see anything, we hear the beep of a telephone dial tone. This familiar sound lets us know instantly that what follows will be a long-distance exchange. For the viewer, this association is made implicitly. It is also quicker compared to a visual sequence establishing their locations, which would have subtracted from the emotional weight of the suggestive tone alone.

In the opening sequence, we encounter Peter walking in. The camera trails from behind. Typically, this hidden camera angle is used to set the audience up for some type of reveal – in this case, the contrast between Bettie's cheerful, happy voice and the sad, dejected look on Peter's face.

The first application of the concept of metaphor is conveyed by Nahom's creative use of blocking. As both characters walk around the room, the physical distance between them is accentuated by the misaligned direction of their movements. The second instance is when he places them in a slightly off-kilter, untouching pose in a setting which is conventionally understood to be a domain of physical intimacy: the bedroom.

My favorite scene in the film is that of dining table and the lateral tracking shot that slides across the table from one character to the other. This camera movement is amongst the most literal and suggests there is nothing more than what you see. But we know that's not the case here. We know our protagonists are miles apart. And we know that the dining table is merely a reflection of that distance – the backs of the two rectangular chairs solid symbols of the characters' struggles to maintain connection



across impediments of time and space. The withdrawing wide shot of the dining table mirrors their situation and tells us all we need to know about their lives. This is why this scene works.

A creative interplay of metaphor and contrast, this segment does an amazing job of amplifying their separation. And when Nahom has established in the mind of the viewer that they are not actually together, he decides to place both characters in one frame.

Another way the director uses contrast to convey the story is by how he frames the scenes before and after the resolution. In the first half, he films using wide shots. The camera is farther from the characters and the frames include a good portion of their background. In the well-lit, well-furnished apartment, a sense of space is created which, despite their communication, or perhaps because of it, teleports their aloneness.

But as the storyline progresses and resolves with the knowledge that Peter will come home and they will be reunited, the shots are close ups of the characters. The angle narrows down to their faces and the frames are tighter. In films, a close up of a character's face is an extremely subjective shot used to demonstrate the character's growing dominance/importance

over his/her surroundings, which can be people, places, or circumstances. In the case of *Home*, the final close ups indicate that the distance and space between the characters will no longer be a defining feature of their lives.

The viewer can instinctively pick up on these visual variations, and understand what the film is trying to tell them. But because these cues are non-verbal, its not always easy to articulate exactly why you understand them.

The last and least noticeable way Nahom achieves this understanding in the viewer is through the use of auditory cues.

To better appreciate this, let's go back to the sound effect. We won't have noticed that there is a complete absence of background noise until the song comes on. The stark silence, like the emptiness of the apartment, seems only to amplify their sense of isolation from each other. By subduing the sound around them, Nahom places a focus on how they interact. The song which seems to contain their most cherished memories becomes their "home". This is why when it is playing we see them touching for the first time during the film.

But of course, any and all acts of physical closeness that take place between them are symbolic. The symbolism, however, is used

to its full cinematic potential. And the end result is a simple, beautiful, moving story that the viewer will have no problem relating to. If *Home* is Nahom Abraham's first film, then it is an impressive debut.

The short film's apparent simplicity can be almost misleading. One may assume it must have taken no more than a couple of hours and several takes to film. In an interview with NEFTI, Nahom recalls that they had to stay up all night filming to get the lighting and the mood exactly right.

For filmmakers, the biggest challenge encountered in short films is that of time. Nahom deals with this constraint by employing all the tools at his disposal. Besides bringing texture and moving the story along, these aspects of filmmaking have the added benefit of compelling the viewer to engage more with the nuanced, non-verbal sides of visual storytelling.

Finally, something could be said of how little importance is given in the film to where the characters are situated geographically. We can conclude that the lack of anything indicating their actual locations is in keeping with the overall message of the film, which is that home is not always a place. Sometimes home is the person you love.

OPINION

The Double-Edged Sword A Practical Guide to Keeping Your Sanity Intact on Social Media

By Delina Yemane Dawit

So what's next? Do we delete our social media accounts now?

Well, that's certainly a personal choice. Personally, even knowing all that I know now, I don't plan on deleting my social media accounts. Like I said, the issue is

Editor's Note: This piece is the final part of a series of articles written by Delina Yemane Dawit. The first part was published on March 4, 2023 under the title, The Double-edged Sword, Digest and Deliberations on "The Social Media", and the second part was published on our April 1, 2023 issue under the title, The Double-edged Sword: Et-tu, Google.

I personally feel that deleting social media accounts altogether-

Dilemma is turning off all notifications so the devices don't pull our attention as often. Moreover, we can resort to using other search engines that don't store search histories. Jaron Lanier advises never to click on the recommended videos on YouTube, but to choose the videos we want to watch ourselves. Stanford Internet Observatory Research Manager and former head of policy at Data for Democracy Renée Diresta emphasizes on fact checking: we shouldn't take a post at face value and we should also consider the source of the news, especially if we're going to share those posts.

Data scientist and author Dr. Cathy O'Neil suggests exposing ourselves to different points of view, even those that are polar opposites of our own. Dr. Jonathan Haidt in turn suggests three rules for navigating the issue of social media with our kids: firstly, devices ought to be kept out of the bedroom after a fixed time every night; secondly, not allowing kids to join social media apps until they are in high school, preferably until sixteen years of age; and thirdly, negotiating a time budget for social media activity with kids as they are likely to agree to a reasonable amount of time. But the most important rule of all is awareness.

In my personal experience, I've found it helpful to be hyper-aware of the things I'm exposed to on Facebook and Instagram. I no longer follow accounts that post images with unrealistic standards of beauty; and I do my best to remove feed that seems intent on triggering my emotions or posts that make me feel the need to measure up to other impossible standards. I most definitely don't have it all figured out- far from it- but my being aware of these issues has certainly helped.

Hope Springs Eternal
Nevertheless, individual behavioral change can only get us so far.

Corporations operating in a free capitalist market with no external regulations whatsoever can be dangerous. One need only follow public hearings involving social media companies to realize this.

The entire point of my writing this is to raise public awareness about something that most of us probably didn't think or know much about. My goal is to continue the conversation that The Social Dilemma started. After all, problems can only be solved when they're acknowledged.

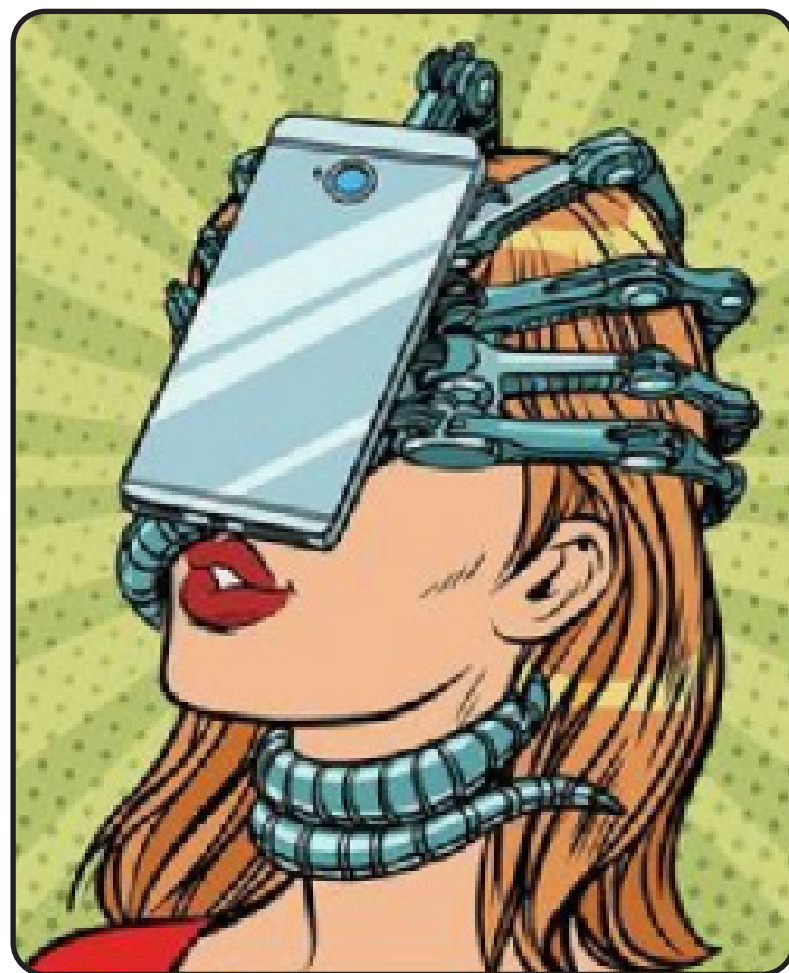
Social psychologist Dr. Barbara L. Fredrickson holds that hope comes into its own when crisis looms, opening us to new creative possibilities. A crisis may be looming in our horizon; but there is still hope. Human beings built social media; and

human beings can fix them.

But as users of these apps, we can't expect these corporations to regulate their own activities even if we believe that they have the moral obligation to bring about that reform, because (in a world where money reigns supreme) it would be against their own interests to impede a system that is working flawlessly to make them money. Proper regulations, legislation and pressure for lasting reform can only come externally and from a collective force. Here, everyone needs to do their part: governments need to implement methods that minimize the negative effects of social media to protect their citizens while still being able to take advantage of its benefits.

As for the billions of users, this will likely be one of those times where we all have to come together to put pressure on these companies by demanding change. Demand that our attention not be "mined" for the purposes of profit; demand that these companies return to a tool-based technology environment; demand that these companies build humane technology. So long as we stick together, there is nothing we can't do.

The question is, will we?



one that is nuanced and complex. Social media is hardly all-black or all-white. When I weigh the pros and cons of my social media activity, I do see all the positive things I gain from it. Not only is it an indispensable tool to keep in touch with all my loved ones who live far from me, it's also a great source of inspiration.

It has been a source of many ideas; it has allowed me to connect with other people, to learn about books, films, poetry, music and art that I otherwise wouldn't have come across. It allows me to travel around the globe without actually traveling. It allows me to share pictures with loved ones- even though I don't often post things publicly. So I can hardly recommend that people delete their social media accounts when I myself don't intend on doing the same.

at least in a large scale and all of them at once- is impractical. Nowadays, it's downright difficult to live without some use of social media. And in some ways, rejecting it altogether is comparable to rejecting electricity: it's possible but you'd just be making life unnecessarily difficult for yourself. Besides, that probably wouldn't be sustainable in the long run. Not to mention, it would have very little impact in the grand scheme of things

So where does this leave us?

If, like me, you don't plan on deleting your social media accounts altogether, there may be some ways of fighting against the addictive nature of social media apps: the most frequent suggestion given by the interviewees on The Social



In celebration of 30 years of Diplomatic Relations between China and Eritrea, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Eritrea invites entries for the:

Essay Contest with Prize under the Topic:

THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN ERITREA AND CHINA IN MY HEART

Directions:

- Entries should not exceed 2,000 words.
- All entries should have a title concerning the above-mentioned topic.
- Entries can be typed and printed (preferred) or written by hand.
- Entries should be written in any language of Tigrinya, Chinese, Arabic or English.
- Please submit entries: 1. to the reception of National Union of Eritrean Women in Asmara from 9-11 am or 3-5 pm and between Monday to Friday; 2. to the email address of **chinaemb_eremfa.gov.cn**.
- All entries should be accompanied by a document providing the participant's full name, age, gender, area of residence, and telephone number.
- Winners will be notified and invited to a special awards ceremony.



Deadline:

19 May 2023 (4:00 pm)

Participation is free of charge and open to all Eritrean nationals



My message to the Eritrean females in the diaspora -- let's keep on working relentlessly for the safety of our kids, keep them safe from unwanted influences and encourage them to join the Eritrean community and learn about their identity. Thank you!



Memories of the Armed Struggle Through the Eyes of a Veteran Fighter!

Our guest today, Aster Tesfaghaber, is a veteran freedom fighter and chair of the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) in North America. Aster joined the EPLF at a very young age. After Eritrea's independence, she went to the USA to seek medical assistance for the disability she sustained during the armed struggle.

Sabrina Solomon

Let's begin with your background

First and foremost, I am grateful for this opportunity. I'm



Aster Tesfaghaber Solomon, a veteran freedom fighter and a mom of two. I have been living in Las Vegas for over 20 years now working as the chairwoman of the NUEW in North America.

Tell us about the activities of the NUEW in North America.

The NUEW works for the rights and equality of Eritrean females. Our branch in North America has been very active ever since its foundation in 1979. We are holding on to that deep rooted foundation helping it to function perfectly. Our formation is divided in to eight districts with two monitors in each district. In addition to that, we have a NUEW sub-branch in 47 cities of America with three administrators in each sub-branch. We have been having continuous sessions and meetings targeting Eritrean females above the age of 16 so that they could join the association. We give young Eritreans between the ages of 5 and 16 lessons in their mother tongue and introduce them to the Eritrean culture and history of Eritrean females. We also play important roles at festivals and other occasions. In my opinion, we are really doing a good job. We also take care of different projects in our nation. So far,

we have built a fully equipped training center in Senafe and Nakfa and we are planning to build one in Massawa.

We face a lot of challenges as Eritreans living in the US. They try to ruin the image of our nation and the NUEW and disband the unity and nationalism we have. But we have defeated them because of our strong unity.

How did you join the EPLF?

My decision to join the EPLF was influenced by my family, the environment in which I grew up and the unbearable colonial period. Also, two of my elder siblings had already joined the EPLF, and that must have



influenced me as well. I joined the EPLF on the 2nd of July 1979 and literally grew up under its care.

When I joined the EPLF's fighters, I was ready to face death and other challenges. Obviously, war is very deadly and extremely painful, and it is through resilience and patience that you can deal with war. The EPLF's army is my family; I grew up and grew old there. It taught me a lot about bravery and gender equality. And that's the secret of the EPLF's success – men and women, the young and the old all working hand in hand.

What was the companionship

and commitment of the freedom fighters like?

I don't even have words for it. When you first join, the older once welcome you just like a family member of their own, which makes you blend in quickly. They are always there trying to make you feel comfortable and make you feel that you belong. They take a bullet for you, and you take a bullet for them. It makes me proud to have seen such kind of courage and love.

During the long years of battles, you see a lot of losses and horrible deaths. Seeing your friends and peers die for freedom makes you be more committed to complete the job. All of the challenges made me stronger and freed my mind from the limitations I had for myself as a female.

What grabbed my attention in the fighting forces is the bravery and heroism of the female fighters. You realize that once they start, they never stop or look back. Period. The females were so determined to fight at battlefields that some hid their eight month long pregnancy to fight until the day they gave



birth.

Can you walk us through your memories when you got hit?

Getting hit and becoming disabled or participating in all parts of the war. We were



made ready for all kinds of eventualities. Almost every EPLF fighter got hit from 2 to 27 times. I was injured 11 times in total, and my first injury was in my thigh. I was hit almost all over my body, and the most severe was the gunshot in my chest in 1988. But it never stopped me from finishing my job. I went back to the battle field as soon as I recuperated.

In the 1988 battle to annihilate Nadow Command, I took a bullet in my chest and lay on the ground for several hours. I am asthmatic because of that and the bullet is still in my body. I am alright because of the medication. And I saw a lot more crazier disabilities when the war ended. Some lost sight, some lost their legs and hands and have concussions and more. So I feel like mine is minor.

What vivid memories of the struggle for independence do you have?

I have a lot of memories that I can't forget, but it might take ages to tell you all of it. I can't really forget the memories of the heroism and determination of the fighters. The memory is with me for life. I saw three siblings die together for our precious mother land and witnessed the fortitude of a mother that lost three children to the war.

Do you visit the battlefields to rekindle your memories?

Absolutely. I went to Emba Derho, Massawa, Dekemhare, Nakfa and some other cities and villages that were battle fields during the armed struggle. And I have plans to visit more places that were like home to me and all the other fighters.

What do you say to the renegades who try to disgrace our cherished freedom?

Continued on page 7