



28TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY OFFICIAL CEREMONY

The official ceremony of the 28th Independence Day Anniversary was colorfully celebrated under the theme “Resilience for Higher Progress”. The ceremony held on 24 May at Asmara Stadium was attended by senior government and PFDJ officials, Army Commanders, religious leaders, members of the Diplomatic Corps as well as thousands of nationals from inside the country and abroad.

In his key note speech, President

Isaias Afewerki congratulated the Eritrean people inside the country and abroad and expressed gratitude to those who stood on the side of the Eritrean people, on the side of truth and justice, for the invaluable solidarity.

As regards the 28 years of independence and sovereignty, President Isaias said that the Eritrean people embarked on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of

their nation, liberated through heavy sacrifice, faced relentless hostilities designed to subdue, weaken and hold them hostage. To this end, President Isaias went on to say that senseless border disputes were concocted, unwarranted sanctions were imposed, naked military attacks launched, political ruses, economic subversions, human trafficking as well as psychological warfare and demonizing aimed at isolating Eritrea were perpetrated,

regardless of that the Eritrean people confronted and vanquished the machinations of their external enemies and secured their independence and sovereignty by combating internal divisive and toxic political tendencies including painful internecine war by constantly strengthening their political cohesion.

President Isaias noted that in this new era without departing from the fundamental principles of nation-building, the cardinal objectives consist of creating and augmenting national wealth through hard work and efficient productivity, and, ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunities.

Referring to programs of implementation, President Isaias stated that priority tasks include refining programs of water supply for household, agriculture and industrial consumption with the utilization of modern technology and associated means; renovation of existing road, rail, cableway and oil pipelines; revive ports and coastline projects that were obstructed and interrupted; replace the old and unreliable power generation system

with a functional grid in the interim period and focus on the design and implementation of an expensive system that will adequately meet all long-term needs and requirements; developing efficient and effective modern domestic road, rail, sea and air transportation linking with regional networks; implement, with revised plans, better technology and efficiency- various housing projects; modernize the health infrastructure to address wider category of health needs and services, prioritize effective and all-rounded investment in education with a view to improve access and bolster human capital; as well as actively create a conducive regional climate for mutual respect and genuine partnership that enhance domestic development programs. (Full text of President Isaias's keynote speech is on page 2)

Speaking at the event, Ambassador Zemed Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports, commended the participation of all institutions for their contribution in realizing the colorful event. The ceremony featured military parade, cultural and artistic as well as calisthenics performances.

MORE MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATION

President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation, President Donald Trump of the United States of America, and President Alpha Conde of the Republic of Guinea sent messages of congratulations to the people and Government of Eritrea in connection with the 28th Independence Day anniversary.

In their messages, President Vladimir Putin, President Donald Trump, and President Alpha Conde wished good health to President Isaias Afwerki and peace and prosperity to the Eritrean people.

The leaders also commended Eritrea's role in the momentous, positive developments in the Horn of Africa, articulated their countries' readiness to elevate the bilateral friendly relations and cooperation with Eritrea to a new height.

President Alpha Conde of the Republic of Guinea on his part commended President Isaias Afwerki for his contribution for peace and stability with the countries of the Horn of Africa as well as the thoughts on the unity and dignity of the African continent.



Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy and President of the

Continued on page 4

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT ISAIAS AFWERKI ON THE 28TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY

**Dear Participant and Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me first convey my heartfelt congratulations to the Eritrean people inside the country and in the Diaspora. I also wish to express our gratitude to all those who stood on the side of the Eritrean people, on the side of truth and justice, for their invaluable solidarity. My thanks to the Commission of Culture and Sports and all compatriots and foreign institutions for their endeavours to imbue commensurate magnificence to this auspicious occasion.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of the 2019 Independence Anniversary is "Resilience for Higher Progress"! Because this is a historical juncture in which the extraordinary resilience of the Eritrean people has been elevated and emerged triumphant once again.

The Eritrean people deserved to be independent, like other colonized peoples and even more so, in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Second World War. But their inalienable national right was suppressed as the great powers of the time felt that "an independent Eritrea would not serve their strategic interests".

For fifty years, the people of Eritrea had to overcome political subterfuges aimed at creating divisions and cleavages amongst them; challenge and triumph over annexation and occupation; and, conduct a thirty-year long armed struggle with unparalleled heroism and sacrifice to achieve independence on the basis of

the supremacy of the rule of law.

In those fifty years, the Eritrean people confronted and vanquished the machinations of their external enemies. They also secured their independence and sovereignty by combating internal divisive and toxic political tendencies, including a painful internecine war; by constantly strengthening their political cohesion.

To highlight a few of the principal values that underpin our resilience: Not to succumb and yield to force and intimidation!... Not to cede to illicit and duplicitous machinations! Not to compromise one's dignity and values for cheap rewards and inducements! Not to be distressed under extreme duress! Not to be disheartened by overwhelming challenges! Not to tire with hard work! Not to spare one's toil and blood, including one's life!... Not to relent until objectives are achieved!

These firm convictions go beyond sheer beliefs and pledges. They have been repeatedly demonstrated and have become the defining characteristics of the Eritrean people's heritage.

How about in the last 28 years of independence and sovereignty?

As the Eritrean people embarked on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of their nation liberated through heavy sacrifices, they faced relentless hostilities designed to subdue, weaken and hold them hostage.

To this end, senseless border disputes were concocted! Unwarranted sanctions imposed! Naked military attacks launched! Political ruses, economic subversion, human trafficking as well as psychological warfare and demonization aimed at isolating Eritrea were perpetrated. One can say: "thwarting all these wrongs would have been unimaginable without the resilience of the Eritrean people"!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

And today?

Our considered approach - when it was deemed that "all past machinations" have ceased and until the illicit sanctions were lifted - was based on recognition of the unfolding events and realities "as the beginnings of a new era". Naturally, these are times of jubilation, lofty aspirations and euphoria! But these momentous events should not prompt us to underestimate the challenges the new era brings.

Before prematurely charting out

new and permanent sustainable development programmes, it is imperative that we conduct extensive political, economic and security appraisals so as to properly diagnose the unfolding realities with requisite depth. We cannot make hasty and emotional conclusions before we collect adequate information, analyze these data comprehensively with patience so as to have a clear picture. Hence, our focus should be geared towards patient appraisal of the unfolding reality. Our tasks and priorities today as well as for the near future should be to guarantee a conducive climate and basis for the new era. This precept emanates from our values that have crystallized over time.

In this new era and without departing from the fundamental principles of nation-building, our cardinal objectives consist of creating and augmenting national wealth through hard work and efficient productivity, and, ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Our principal aim is to transform the primordial subsistence economy to a modern and developed industrial economy to bring sustainable change in the quality of life to vast segments of the population; especially those deprived in the past.

In order to pursue our nation building endeavours with a steady pace by marshalling our resources, and to capitalize on the momentum for greater rapid growth, we need to rigorously review fundamental programmes that will buttress real economic growth through higher productivity and increased output. These development programmes can be distilled as follows:

○ Water infrastructure and distribution: To further refine our programmes of water supply for household, agriculture, and industrial consumption with the utilization of modern technology and associated means.

○ Road, rail, cableway and oil pipelines: The three phases of i) renovation of existing systems; ii) expansion to ensure higher efficiency; and iii) implementation of new schemes that we have been pursuing in all these categories should be pursued with greater efficiency and expeditious scale of implementation.

○ Ports and coastlines: To revive projects that were obstructed and interrupted, with upgraded plans and implement them within a wide framework of cooperation and partnership.

○ Power generation and electricity supply: To replace the



old and unreliable power generation system with a functional grid in the interim period and focus on the design and implementation of an expansive system that will adequately meet all long-term needs and requirements.

○ Efficient and effective modern domestic road, rail, sea and air transport: To link these systems with regional networks within a revised plan.

○ Housing: To implement - with revised plans, better technology and efficiency - various housing projects that have not been successful so far as provision of housing remains one of the fundamental yardsticks for measuring the quality of life.

○ Health and Education Services: To modernize the health infrastructure to address wider category of health needs and services; to prioritize effective and all-rounded investment in education in order to improve access at all levels and thereby bolster our human capital which is critical for development and nation-building.

○ Industrial sector: To undertake comprehensive review - of each programme and each enterprise - in order to formulate and implement a refined investment road-map.

○ Implementation: To polish existing implementation mechanism in all the Development Fronts for higher effectiveness and to especially expedite the review of programmes and modalities underway to match the decisive contributions of our citizens in the Diaspora.

○ Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness: to strengthen the relentless fight against corruption and speculation.

○ Regional partnership and stability: to actively create a conducive regional climate for mutual respect and genuine partnership that enhance domestic development programmes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The above listed programmes are not new. Comprehensive revision of the detailed programmes and implementing them within the framework of the new era cannot be accomplished through simplistic solutions and short-cuts. They will depend, as always, on the full participation of our people and their relentless toil and resilience. This will not be difficult as the inherent values and traditions of resilience - encapsulated in the mantra of "Resilience through Resilience" - is intact as ever.

As it has been the case throughout our history, and more so in this present era, there are those who are exemplary in their selfless dedication; who give their all without any reward; and, who give us moral gratification. I avail of this occasion to express our profound gratitude to all these exceptional people, who work the most and hardest, and to members and leaders of our Defense Forces".

Resilience for Higher Progress!

Our Progress will continue with good rains!

And above all, Glory to our Martyrs!

Victory to the Masses!

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**Acting Editor
Amanuel Mesfun**

P.O.Box: 247
Tel: 11-41-14
Fax: 12-77-49
E-mail:
eritreaprofilenews@gmail.com
Advertisement: 12-50-13

**Layout
Azmera Berhane
Aida Johar**



Eritrea at its 28th Birthday



Habtom Tesfamichael

Eritrea celebrated colorfully the 28th Independence Day anniversary yesterday and with a patriotic zeal after a series of week-long events. This is the day that marks the end of successive colonial subjugation.

As Eritreans around the world are gathering to cheer for their homeland and celebrate the country's Independence Day on 24 May, it is appropriate to remember how the independent country was born, its independence maintained and how it is pursuing its development policy.

May 24 is a great day in Eritrea's history as EPLF fighters entered Asmara having defeated the then giant and largest army in Africa. The 30-year armed struggle ended with referendum in 1993 when the Eritrean people voted for independence overwhelmingly, with 99.8%, in the presence of international observers. In the years that followed, the people and government of Eritrea embarked on rehabilitating the war-torn country and started the journey with impressive progress. But this didn't last long. It was halted by the then Ethiopian government's aggression in 1998 based on the pretext of border claims. When the war ended with international legal proceedings, Ethiopia continued its belligerent stance till the sweeping changes occurred in April last year that opened a new chapter of peace and harmony between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Every year we celebrate our independence day with great honor of our martyrs who gave us this light. What makes this year's Independence Day special is the fact that we are celebrating it in a peaceful atmosphere. The peace will allow us to focus on development and cooperation with our neighbors.

Since May 24, 1991 all Eritreans at home and in the diaspora have celebrated the Independence Day colorfully as the commitments and sacrifices to realize this magnificent day were tremendous and the oppression and pains sustained by the Eritrean people was immense.

Eritrea's Independence Day is



not merely meant for rejoicing. We rejoice precisely because it is an event that brought the protracted colonial rule to an end. More importantly, however, on this day we remember the tens of thousands of fallen heroes who sacrificed their life for independence and renew our pledge to maintain, sustain and develop it.

In order to win our independence, we had to fight practically on our own against all the super powers. This special situation taught us self-reliance which will lead us to our ultimate goal of building a secure and prosperous nation. We know from our experience that the neo-colonial powers set Africans against one another in order to better plunder the continent's wealth. But Eritrea chose to adopt a development policy that left no room for interference from foreign powers.

At present, all over Africa, countries will celebrate the 60th anniversaries of their independence. Unfortunately, the continent actually never freed itself from colonialism; it has just took on a different form. The Horn of Africa region has been disturbed by foreign interference with the help of governments put to serve them. These regimes have been profiting from the system while the vast majority of their population was condemned to poverty. They are now kicked out of their places and the region has just started peaceful cooperation. As China's ambassador to Eritrea, Mr. Yang Zigang, said on Monday

at Cinema Roma, the cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea has influenced the whole region of the Horn of Africa and a wind of hope is blowing.

The theme of this year is "resilience for higher progress" which reflects our commitment to building a secure state standing on its own feet. Eritrea has achieved great success in the last 28 years, resting on five pillars. The first one is agriculture and food security. The Eritrean government understood from the very beginning that we cannot defend our national sovereignty if our population is dying of hunger. Therefore, various projects have been implemented aiming at securing this through different mechanisms which include

a focus on encouraging commercial and small scale farming in different corners of the country. Moreover, every peasant owns his or her own piece of land. The government always provides material and other agriculture-related assistance.

The second pillar is access to potable water. In many third world countries many illnesses are linked to unsafe water. But that can be put right by providing safe drinking water to all the villages.

The third pillar is health. Eritrea has an efficient network of clinics spread throughout the country and linked up to hospitals. Moreover, healthcare is provided for free. This sector has achieved commendable progress and it is one of the areas

Eritrea has been succeeding in achieving the UN drafted development goals.

The fourth pillar is education, a priority for the government that wishes to develop its human resources. In Africa many have lost sight of the fact that material resources are not enough to bring about development. Of course, this very much suits the imperialist powers that have always encouraged the belief that without their assistance Africans would not be able to profit from their material resources. The human factor is of primary importance for development, and Eritrea, therefore, wants its own personnel to have the competence to exploit its raw materials.

The last pillar, which President Isaias Afwerki referred to as the fourth front, is the Eritrean Diaspora who provide different kinds of assistance to their homeland. In doing so, Eritreans outside the country are providing material and diplomatic support. We have seen western states trying, though without success, to disrupt the link the diaspora Eritreans have to their homeland.

In conclusion, the cruel treatments that the Eritrean people experienced at the hands of the successive Ethiopian rulers are still fresh in our mind. That is why freedom has a special meaning for Eritreans which necessitates the colorful celebration of our independence day.





When Rain Joins the Independence Day Celebrations

Natnael Yebio W.

Was May of last year as rainy as May of this year! People have short memories when it comes to weather. If you find certain days in Asmara unduly hot or cold and you are from Asmara, then you must have changed a lot.

Sometimes the whole of Asmara spectacle comes and goes in minutes, fascinatingly local when a kilometer or two down the road remains bone dry. The weather feels personal, purging, and inside the storms is another, existential world. Or that's how it felt, broken down on the motorway. Mercifully in the afternoon hours of Independence eve this past Thursday evening, I was in a cafe shop, even lucky enough to have a seat by the windows and once the rain started it was hard not to glance through the windows and enjoy the rain pouring down, to see the clean city of Asmara celebrating its Independence week in such heavenly weather that adds something special to the festivities.

Our independence day could have fallen on the month of November or December, where the sun sets at 6 o'clock and the cold Siberian wind causes everybody to hurry up after work to the warmth of home and the family leaving the streets of Asmara to people with cars and to those who enjoy their beers once in a while.

"Hi, Astier, it has been ages. Do you live in Asmara?"

"No, I have just arrived from Germany to celebrate Independence Day?"

"Is that your daughter?.....Hi, little girl!"

"She can speak Tigrigna. I have taught her myself."

"Where is Haile (her husband)?"

"He is coming in August for the festival."

May be the trip was expensive for both. And Haile had to save



money by working summer. After all he can celebrate Independence Day in Germany and Festival Eritrea here. And it would be the other way round for Astier.

Why Eritrea was freed in May and not in January or in February can only be answered by analyzing a lot of variables and paradigms. It is like cutting down a big tree. You go on hacking at it with an axe. But no one can tell precisely when the tree will fall down.

By the way, does it matter at all to know the exact time? Not much.

But the season matters to some extent. As far as independence is concerned it may not matter, but as far as celebrating independence is concerned (with street plays, bands performing in open stages, strolling down Harnet Avenue, etc.) season seems to matter a lot.

Rain can sometimes spoil the festivity, but I have never witnessed big festivals marred by rainstorm. It is said that it happened in America one 4th of July. The rain came and spoiled everything. The next day, a certain newspaper ran this headline. *The Most Unfourthnate July!*

I think neither rain nor storm, nor should heat or cold be allowed to dim the enthusiasm and zeal in

celebrating independence days.

Of course, the dancing and merriment cannot be the same in the rain under a clear and starry sky. But since dancing is an outward expression of inner joy, the latter can never be dampened down by rain or hailstorm. At least for the majority.

"Hi, Rajul so you are taking a stroll like everybody else?"

"There is festive mood everywhere; it makes me happy to see smiling faces."

"Are you watching some of the performances?"

"Yes, I think Independence Day

is celebrated in a very unique manner in this country."

"Indeed. Besides, don't forget this is being celebrated at such an important time in the history of this country and region."

By the way, most of the 14 of July dancers in Paris have only a vague knowledge of the revolution, and if they danced at all, that was because they were programmed to dance on that day. That's what their ancestors have been doing for the last two centuries.

However, most dancers in Bahti Meskerem or Harnet Avenue know about their revolution first hand. Some had taken part in it and have lost a limb or an eye as a result.

"How do you think they celebrate in Dekemhare or Massawa?"

"The same as in here. There may be more facilities and varieties here, but the enthusiasm is the same everywhere."

MORE MESSAGES ...

Continued from page 1

European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi on his part sent message of congratulation to the people and Government of Eritrea in connection with the 28th Independence Day anniversary.

Similarly, President Sergio Mattarella of the Republic of Italy, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Sheik Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates sent messages of congratulations to the people and Government of Eritrea in connection with the 28th Independence Day Anniversary.

In his message, Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed said that the peace agreement signed between Eritrea and Ethiopia has ushered in a new era in the relations between the two

countries and that attests the high level visits and people to people exchanges over the past one year. Dr. Abiy Ahmed also expressed confidence on elevating the relations of the two countries into a new height for the mutual benefits of both countries and peoples.

President Sahle-Work Zewde of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia also sent similar message of congratulation.

Likewise, President Mohamed Abdullahi of the Federal Republic of Somalia expressed confidence that the relations between his country and Eritrea will develop to the highest level in the mutual interests of the two brotherly countries.

In a letter the African National Congress of the Republic of South Africa sent, congratulated the people and Government of Eritrea with the positive development of peace

emerging in the Horn of Africa.

Similarly President Mattarella of Italy wished good health to President Isaias Afwerki and peace and prosperity to the Eritrean people. President Mattarella also said that the deep-rooted friendship between Eritrea and Italy have recently found new space for implementation following the historic peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

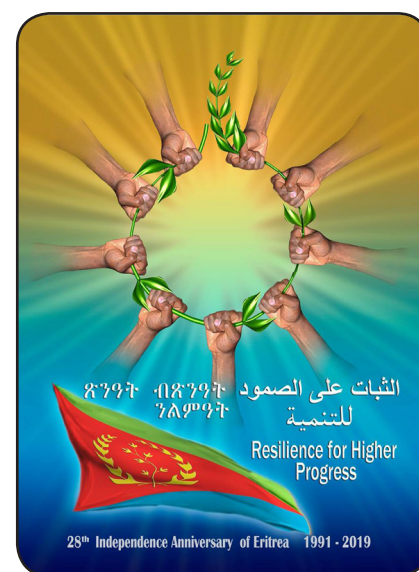
The Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE, Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheik Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan also sent similar messages of congratulations.

In their messages the leaders wished good health to President Isaias Afwerki and peace and prosperity to the Eritrean people.



This is what the Eritrean people are all about!

The African Modernist City,
Asmara, Celebrates Eritrea's 28th Independence Anniversary



Billion Temesghen

Carnivals are held worldwide in a myriad of ways on different occasions. They are, indeed, great ways of bringing people together to celebrate. In Eritrea, carnivals are not very common. The few ones that come about, though, are extremely loved and memorable.

Asmara, the African modernist city, hosts an annual carnival in May; the month in which the country's Independence Day is commemorated. On the 22nd of May, this year too, Asmara had its epic and yearlong awaited carnival. All the subzones of the city contribute in the making and exhibition of the carnival that trails its proceedings through the avenues of the beautiful Eritrean capital city. For the event, people dress to impress in traditional outfits. The colorful chiffon of the ladies is a sight to see.

For this year thirteen subzones of the central region came together to give life to an amazing carnival that lasted for more than three hours in the beautiful afternoon of the 22nd of May, 2019. The carnival was officially opened by the Governor of Central Region, Gen. Ramadan Osman Awliay, and the Commissioner of Sports and Culture, Ambassador Zemed Tekle. After the opening ceremony, members of the National Union of Eritrean Women started running and jumping through the two sides of the road, throwing flowers and popcorns, a typical rite of the Eritreans extended to welcome or greet someone. They chanted and ululated in joy. A folk song that dates back to centuries beseeching the nascent of the youth so that they "be countless armors and protect home" started reverberating from the area around City Park, an emotional song of Eritrean mothers for the sake of the young ones.

The parade started soon after. The carnival mainly highlighted, step by step, the main events and most unforgettable episodes in Eritrea's modern history. The parade started with a comic vibe promising the audience that the carnival was sure proceeding to be enjoyable. Young, tall and light-

skinned boy in his early twenties, dressed up like young President Isaias Afwerki in 1993, mimed the president's speech of late April 1993 that he gave soon after the announcement of the referendum for the sovereignty of Eritrea. More youngsters dressed as journalists and broadcasters gave life to the scene. The well-performed act made everyone present laugh.

The Subzone of Tiravolo and their cart followed with a different act -- the first trip to Sawa. The place in the lowlands of Eritrea brings thousands of young Eritreans from all over the country together in one big campground. Sawa holds a big place in the hearts of the Eritrean youth and it first started in 1994. Sawa was an arid land back then. The youth who first got there got the merit of making Sawa as we know it today. They built it on the principles of valor for generations to come and so Sawa has become a passage of rite for young Eritreans. Those who go through it assume on the role of protecting and building the nation. The torch of Sawa has been going down to generations -- from the first round in 1994 all the way to the next round based in Sawa now, the 33rd round.

The next chapter in the Eritrean

history book, after the advent of Sawa, was one of the gloomiest. Nineteen years back, around this time, the Ethiopian offensive took place. The following few years of the first decade in 2000 saw ruins after ruins and painful memories, which were rendered alive for a moment through shows arranged by the subzones of Godaif, Sembel, Geza-Banda and Abashawl. Once again the people stood together against all odds. Mothers sent their sons and daughters to war. They sold their jewelries to support the nation. And when Eritreans were unjustly kicked-out from Ethiopia they welcomed them back home.

As the parade went on the following carts of Arbate Asmara sub zone exhibited the resistance of the Eritrean people against foreign interference to impede the country's national development plans. Once again the Eritrean people stood together in making their voice heard. The Eritrean diaspora united to send their message of resilience. Arbate Asmara geared up to exhibit to the resilience and unity of the Eritrean people worldwide.

On June 20th 2018, last year, President of the State of Eritrea made an announcement that Eritrea was to send delegates for

the peace process. That same day is Eritrea's Martyrs day. Akria's show illustrated the figure of a letter: "from Eritrea to Ethiopia".

The subzones of Idaga Hamus and Maitemenay were next in line. They prepared their artistry to exhibit the new political developments in the Horn of Africa. Tsetserat and Paradiso carried messages of good will for the growth of the youth and the development of the country.

The three-hour long procession reserved a spot for the Eritrean American actress Tiffany Haddish. She showed up in a beautiful gown made with the colors of the Eritrean flag. She ululated all the way through the carnival receiving tons of affection from the public watching the carnival on the two sides of Harnet and Semaetat avenues.

According to several opinions of the people present in the event, the carnival was very well executed and was very different from those of the previous years as it exhibited recollections that "are not far-fetched in the memories of the Eritrean people". "History is our lesson, we forgive but don't forget... what you saw is what the Eritrean people are all about," one

college student told me.

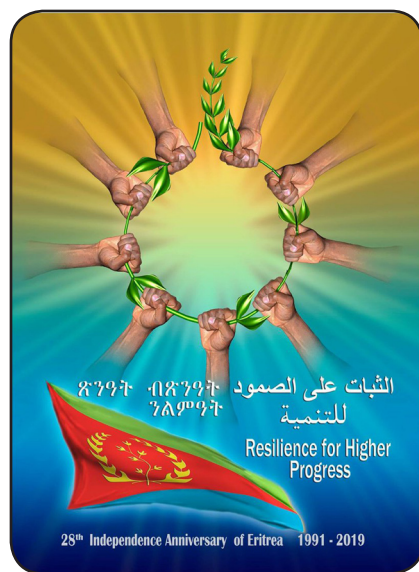
The carnival saw the involvement of the youth. A big part of the parade was organized and executed by high school students. The parade was simple, enjoyable and expressive. So much so that one who is not aware of the Eritrean history would be able to learn its 28-year-long history in a procession of three hours.

The carnival's main objective was "the people of Eritrea", their union, companionship and martyrdom for the home they profoundly adulate. They hold hands for better or worst.

The carnival was scheduled to end at six o'clock for the Muslims to break the Ramadan fast. Eritreans celebrate religious rites together. When the carnival ended the next plan on the timetable of many, mostly non followers, was grabbing an early dinner at their Muslim friends and family.

Yes, the carnival showed it all but the life style of Eritreans makes it more obvious. Their history, practices and way of being makes one spot early on that they might be the most united people on the face of the earth... "This is what the Eritreans are all about!"





Celebrating Independence With Great Delight



Lwam kahsay

Eritrea's independence has a special meaning to Eritreans as this freedom and independence is not bestowed as a gift or gesture of benevolence of the colonizers. It was an independence brought by unadulterated determination, unabated commitment, immeasurable sacrifices, patriotism and unparalleled courage. It is quite easy for an outsider to see that May 24, our independence day, is the most significant of holidays for Eritreans because it was on this day, 28 years ago, that we were able to ascertain our existence as a sovereign people and nation.

The patriotic manner in which Eritreans inside and outside the country celebrate the day symbolizes the Eritrean identity and dignity as a people capable of being the masters of their destiny. Independence Day therefore is awaited with great expectations. On this day people not only celebrate their precious freedom but also use it as a time to get together to strengthen their unity and devotion to each other. They are always united as a people to make this national holiday fantastic and pleasant each year.

As part of the different programs scheduled for the 28th Independence Day celebrations, residents of 13 administrative districts of Asmara gathered on 17th and 23rd May in various pavilions, halls and school auditoriums to celebrate and express their delight of the historic significance of independence.

The Peradizo administrative district celebrated the Independence Day on 17th May with great enthusiasm and honor. Government officials and sub-zonal administrators were invited to celebrate the day. What made the event special was the presence of the famous American actress, Tiffany Hadish. She was escorted to the celebration by Ambassador Zemed Tekle. She said that she was glad to be part of this important day and feels blessed to be born from an Eritrean.

The Sembel administrative district also celebrated the day with devotion. The celebrations included activities like cultural and revolutionary songs



Mr. Weldemikael Yihdego

and dances. Dramas and poems were also presented by students.

One of the attendants of the day, Mr. Weldemikael Yihdego said that freedom is the most valuable human right and we, Eritreans, were deprived of our right because of the colonizers. But after 30 years of war we gained our independence.

We have fought a series of wars against invading enemies which ultimately took thousands of precious Eritrean lives. For this reason, in the wars before and after independence, there is no family that has not lost a loved one for the noble cause. Every Eritrean has missed his or her dearest one, a brother or a sister, cousin or aunt, lover or a friend, a mother or father. These loved ones fell for the sake of their people's freedom. Therefore, it is our duty to keep our promises

to build our country through hard work and resilience.

Mr. Weldemikael also noted that Eritrean independence is the result of resilience. Not only the independence we are celebrating but also the prevailing peace is the result of the Eritrean people's resilience. At last, Mr. Weldemikael gave his regard to our martyrs who lost their lives for independence as well as for the Eritrean defense forces who are fulfilling their duty of protecting Eritrea's borders.

Another attendant of the day, Mrs. Mekeret Adresom, a veteran fighter, said that our independence is every Eritrean's pride. We, as Eritreans,



Mrs. Mekeret Adresom

went through a lot to get to where we are today. We saw our brothers getting killed on the streets. We faced discrimination as a people. But what got us out of all this dreadful time was our unity and resilience.

Every Eritrean has contributed and suffered from a great loss to get this freedom. That is why this day means so much for every Eritrean in every corner of the world. She also added that Eritrean independence has particular meaning to Eritrean mothers. Eritrean women contributed so much for independence. Some gave their precious lives, some their sons and daughters and others their husbands. They even gave away their ornaments in support of our gallant defence forces in their fight against the Weyane's war of aggression. There are no sufficient words to explain the price that Eritrean women have paid to bring independence. At last, Mrs. Mekeret recommended that it is every one's responsibility to keep our independent and sovereign state and pass it on to the coming generations.

Mr. Issak Teklebrhan, a 92-year-old man, was another exemplary attendant of the gathering. He lived under three colonial powers and said that Eritreans were deprived of their right during the colonial period. But now they have become owners of their land and sea. Mr. Issak was given a certificate of appreciation by Sembel Sub-Zone administrator for his contribution every year for the celebration of Independence Day.

As the theme of this year "resilience for higher progress" goes, the people of Eritrea have the stamina and courage to march on the street of development and prosperity energized by the prevailing peace. I wish a happy independence day to all the Eritrean people.



Mr. Issak Teklebrhan

Female Talents Highlight 28th Independence Festivities

Asmait Futsumbrhan

May 24, a historic day for the people of Eritrea to come together and celebrate their freedom as a nation. May is the month that every Eritrean, from all walks of life, awaits with an equal anticipation to remember and honor how good it is to be free and walk the streets of their own cities filled with enthusiasm and confidence. It is the time all the people of Eritrea from all over the world remember the harsh times they went through as people and honor the heroes that have paid the ultimate price to bring them the freedom they deserved. Now, as they have been busy celebrating the 28th Independence Anniversary week, the recent peace situation that the country has embarked on added more meaning and color to the event.

As annually hosted, Eritreans have been busy reveling in many programs that represented the event that made the celebrations more enthusiastic and vibrant. The independence week celebrations included Sport competitions, art exhibitions, international and local music band shows, various artistic street shows are few of the programs that lighted up the independence week-long celebrations.

One of the many programs that took place was the Zinar art group exhibition the National Union of Eritrean Women hosted at their gallery in the name of independence. The exhibition opened on the 16th of May where Ministers and high ranking officials attended. The NUEW hosted the art exhibition for the fourth time now. The annually displayed art exhibition aims to encourage female artists to follow their dreams and helps them upgrade their talents as artists by providing a competitive ground for them. The union firmly believes that Eritrean female artists aren't

well encouraged to continue in art despite their great skills. The art exhibition included paintings, sculpture and innovational works which were prepared with a refrain that could represent the independence celebrations.

Ms. Zaid Mesfn, Head of administration and finance, told during an interview that the NUEW gives this exhibition a huge consideration as it is a one way to encourage female artists through displaying their talents and introduce them to the public. She also said "This art exhibition promotes the female artists in every way. We also display photographs at our gallery which we collected from the archives of the Ministry of Information and our own documentation center that shows the formation and growth of the NUEW over the years. The gallery stays open to anyone interested all year long; it is the way we tell our stories, our challenges and advancements till we get here to the younger generation."

Ms. Zaid further noted that the NUEW followed a different idea regarding the innovations that were presented at

being modified and upgraded in a bigger scale. We have nominated the presenters here depending on the kind of work they presented. This presents them with a much greater platform to promote them as artists and innovators", Ms. Zaid added.

Yosan Kaleab, an innovator, sculptor and painter is one of the artists who participate annually. She came up with an invention of a modern stove that mixes bakes and takes out of the oven by itself, which could bring change in the society. "I have a painting, a sculpture and this modern stove here this year. I feel like this is an opportunity for us to show the people that we can do anything." She says with enthusiasm while

competition, we work hard to come up with the best artistic work. That is where we are focused and determined to be good at what we do and present," told us artist Shewit who is a married woman and a mother of three. She further explained how significant it is to get the support of the family to be successful in the art world especially for women who are married and with kids.

In addition to all the programs that were organized by all



Ms. Zaid Mesfn

isn't popular in Eritrea, history shows that it is one of the oldest games played by the locals. In addition, Eritrea has been one of the participants at the Individual Chess Championship 2019 where the East, Middle and North African countries participated which was hosted by Kenya in Mombasa. The competition included Open section, Rapid and Blitz types of competition. At the tournaments which 11 countries competed, Eritrea was able to get encouraging results and was able to get into competitive ranks.

The badminton and tennis games were also competitions that took the hearts of the fans. The play-offs encompassed 185 games which were fierce. Out of the 76 players 22 were females. All the competitions were concluded on the 19th of May. I have personally come to understand that the sports competitions and art exhibitions organized by the NUEW encourage young female talents to follow their dreams and that the Independence season not only serves as a glorious event in the Eritrean calendar, it also is a time for young talents to showcase their capacities. Resilience for Higher Progress!!



Shewit

the governmental and non-governmental institutions, sport contests were one of the events that were included enthusiastically. As Eritrea has been known for its sport skills over the years, the Commission of Culture and Sports makes it its main task to inspire youth to get into sport by arranging competitions throughout the year. This year, badminton, tennis and chess tournaments are few of the sport activities that added taste to the festivities.

The Chess Federation in central region has organized chess games which were highly modest. Even though chess



Yosan

explaining how her stove works. Her innovation has gotten great response from the audience.

Also another artist displayed painting of an Eritrean mother, who has seen different colonizers in Eritrea, including its independence and peace situation. She says what better painting can describe the Eritrean people's toil to achieve freedom. After witnessing many colonies and enjoying the peace with her grandchildren, the Eritrean mother's painting is titled "Nkulu Inqua' Arkebaku", literally translated as "Blessed to have seen it all". "This exhibition is just platform for us to upgrade our skills as female artists, as it provides an environment for



the exhibition. They instructed the innovators to come up with works that would specifically help out in the daily lives of a woman and the innovators delivered perfectly. This year, the organization tried to follow another idea, an invention that can bring change to the society in general.

"We had interesting inventions last year. Which some of them are



REPORTAGE

“Resilience for Higher Progress” Eritrea celebrates its 28th Independence Anniversary with great patriotic zeal

Billion Temesghen

Yesterday, Friday May 24th, the people of Eritrea celebrated the 28th Independence Anniversary with great patriotic zeal. After a week of celebrations nationwide, people gathered in thousands yesterday, at the Asmara Stadium, for the official Independence Day ceremony. In the afternoon hours, nationals from inside the country and abroad, tourists, invited guests, friends of Eritrea, diplomats, delegates and high ranking officials flocked to the venue of the official ceremony.

The light drizzling rain excited the partakers. Asmara, the “city above the clouds” was breathing a soft breeze of air to make the day even more spectacular. President Isaias Afwerki was last to arrive and the ceremony officially opened twenty minutes past four o’clock in the afternoon. The Commissioner of Sports and Culture, Ambassador Zemed Tekle, opened the ceremony with a greeting speech.

Ambassador Zemed Tekle explained that the commission’s plan while preparing for this year’s celebration was to exhibit Eritrea’s national identity. The months long preparations saw the participation of many professionals, as per the commissioner’s speech. Moreover, he thanked young artists for sharing their energy in the preparation and execution of a festive season.

The Commissioner then invited

President Isaias Afwerki to deliver his keynote address to the people of Eritrea on the occasion of the 28th Independence Day Anniversary of the Eritrean people. In his speech, President Isaias, first conveyed his greetings to the people of Eritrea, thanked Eritrea’s friends for their companionship, appreciated everyone who contributed in the merriments of the season and welcomed the partakers of the official ceremony.

President Isaias went on to reiterate that the theme in which the 28th Independence Day Anniversary is being celebrated, “Resilience for Higher Progress”, suits most the nation’s current situation because it is the merit of the people’s lengthy and persistent resilience.

President Isaias then went on to elaborate how the strength of the people got the State of Eritrea this far against all odds. And now, he went on to say, in the new era the people’s drive should be more than ever for a resilient growth. President Isaias also mapped out some of the national plans the country is working on and will be working in the future in different development areas such as health, education, industrial, infrastructural, political diplomacies in the region, protecting the environment and others.

President Isaias concluded his speech with a special note of gratitude to those who devoted so much for the country; the Eritrean



youth in the military.

The Eritrean Marching Band accompanied by a parade followed the speech of the president. Ululations and cheers from the partakers accompanied the parade who chanted this year’s anniversary motto, “Resilience for Higher Progress”.

Alivelyperformancethenfollowed. The performance that illustrated the people’s unity was prepared by 250 students. The performance featured poems with profound words that describe the importance of the day, short songs and exciting and expressive calisthenics routines. The songs and poems sang and recited in different native languages of Eritrea,

were all of young actors and singers and only few senior artists took part in the show.

Unity, strength, altruism, patience, love, companionship, motherliness, fraternity were some of the values that resounded from the acts

Anniversary is being celebrated in an era Eritrea has aspired to have since its liberation. Many years of patience paid-off and with the regional harmony Eritrea is enjoying now, more than ever, the country will prosper in its long envisioned national and social growth. The



presented in the show.

The second part of the ceremony was recited by the show prepared by 3,400 students, 50 artists and teachers. The theme of their performance was “peace for joint progress”. The students, artists of the day, wore white gowns and beautifully danced routines that filled the stadium with youthful enthusiasm while, at some point, waving flags of the countries of the Horn of Africa.

The official ceremony concluded with the national anthem. The youth however, took the ‘after-party’ to the center stage!

This year’s Independence

28th Independence Day Anniversary defers from the previous ones as this is the first time in twenty years in which Eritrea is celebrating its Independence in full harmony. With the 28th Independence Day Anniversary, Eritrea hopes for national growth and regional stability; for the country and its people to prosper in peace and for the people of the Horn to flourish equally. Surely, after all they have been through, the people feel most deserving for the peace reigning in the region. That is what many participants told the media.

Happy 28th Independence Day Anniversary to the People and Government of Eritrea!!






Resilience for Higher Progress

Hotel Asmara Palace on the occasion of the 28th Independence Day Express its best wishes to be Happy and Prosperous Period.

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Eritrea Telecommunication Corporation (EriTel) congratulates the people of Eritrean on the 28th anniversary of the Eritrean independence and is proud to introduce its new web site www.eritel.com.er.

The web site incorporates information about Mobile, Fixed, Wireless, Internet services and others.

EriTel invites all to visit www.eritel.com.er.

Eritrea Telecommunication Corporation (EriTel)

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Happy 28th independence day to the People and
the government of Eritrea.

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Invitation for Bids

Ministry of Marine Resources-Fisheries Resources Management
Program

IFAD -- GRANT No. DSF-2000001700-ER

Procurement of Flake Ice Machine

International Competitive Bidding (ICB)

IFB No.: MMR/FReMP/G/ICB/0002/2019

1. The Government of the State of Eritrea has received grant from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) toward the cost of Fisheries Resources Management Program, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the procurement of IFB No.: MMR/FReMP/G/ICB/0002/2019
2. MMR-FReMP now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders with renewed license for 2019 for the procurement of **Flake Ice Machine**.
3. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the MMR-FReMP and inspect the Bidding documents at the address given below, from 7.00 – 3:00 p.m. local time, Monday through Friday.
4. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Eritrean Nakfa (ERN) **1000.00** (One thousand Eritrean Nakfa or equivalent in foreign currency to the account number Marine Resources – fisheries resource management program for further

credit to our Acct. No

In Nakfa Account No: 1203010679

In dollar Account No: 1201220226

5. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **8 July 2019**
6. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives who choose to attend in person at the address below all bids must be accompanied by a bid security mentioned in the bidding documents.
8. The address referred to above is:

The Ministry of marine Resources-fisheries Resources management program.

Contact Person: Ms. Makda Mebrahtu

Street Address: Hiday Street 748-1

Block and Floor: Dembe Sembel, Block "A", 4th Floor, RH

City: Asmara

P.O.Box 923

ZIP code: 748-1

Country: Eritrea

Telephone: 291-1-153958

Facsimile number: 291-1-153961

E-mail: makumebrahtu9@gmail.com or ahmed3hassen@gmail.com



"The world needs to know how amazing Eritrea is", Tiffany Hadish

Asmait Futsumbrhan

No introduction needed to who she is. After her first visit last year, the Black Unicorn is back to celebrate the 28th Independence celebrations with her people in Eritrea. Ever since her recent reconnection with her Eritrean heritage, Tiffany has proudly been in-touch with her Eritrean side. Now that she is here to celebrate the biggest and glorious day for Eritreans, she managed to visit a number of places including the historical trenches of Nakfa, where she actually conducted the interview.

"I don't want to have to ask permission to come and see my people, I want to come when I want to come to be with my people", Actress and Author Tiffany Hadish

Welcome back Tiffany, what new changes have you noticed since your last visit?

I have seen a lot of things and advancements. For example, the roads to Massawa are not as bumpy as they used to be, it was a smooth and very nice ride. I love the roads to Massawa. I have also noticed more internet cafes which I was excited about, a lot more farmlands, which is really exciting to me, and more livestock. Most of all, the President showed me the amazingly beautiful Dams.

You have travelled to a number of places during your stay, how did you enjoy them?

I have been to Asmara, Massawa, Dihil Island and Nakfa. Dihil is an Island where the Afar ethnicity inhabits. The food was really good and I enjoyed the singing and dancing. I also went to sleep in one of their traditional beds outdoors with the stars and everything, I was just knocked out, and it was so good. It was wonderful. And my most favorite place of all was

the hot springs at Mai Wuei. It is a beautiful place; the hot springs have helped me with my knees, which I recently have just hurt.

Tiffany, you are here for the independence celebration, how does it make you feel, especially with the peace situation that the country has recently embarked on?

Coming to Eritrea at the time where it celebrates its independence week, there have been many events I attended which one of them was the carnival. It was so much fun and I am happy that I could be part of it. All our freedom fighters sacrificed their lives to make sure that we have our independence and our own land. Personally, I feel like it's not recognized enough.

Now, we are here in Nakfa, the home of the heroes; the freedom fighters. The homes of the people were bombed and had to move away but they took care of the freedom fighters and look out for them. To be walking those trenches and seeing how they were defending



their lands with the enemy just steps away, we had these people willing to sacrifice and to be strong. I was going through every emotion at the book. I was feeling every emotion you could feel. I am still feeling it. It is a lot of pain. Still is beautiful. Those trenches are Eritrean version of the Great Wall of China, the great trenches of Eritrea. I saw the trenches and I keep thinking to myself that, would I have done that? Would I have done all the things they did? So my gratitude, I am so grateful that they did that and were willing to sacrifice for the future, for their children and grandchildren. To me it's a lot; it is a lot of emotions that I am dealing with. I am trying to figure out how to process all of this. I couldn't imagine how someone could be lived through it and survived. I know it had to hurt tremendously to see someone that you care about die right in front of you and your home blowing up right in front of you. It is a sad situation. And the fact that I didn't know about it for so long makes me really upset. I don't understand why they don't talk about it anywhere else in the world. But the fact that I am here now, and be able to celebrate those people that paid their lives for this,

to show gratitude and appreciation, with every one teaming up and staying strong and not giving up, to me is amazing and I am grateful.

I also got my citizenship here in Eritrea. Signing those papers and getting the validation meant the world to me. That is something my father wanted. I love my father so much and maybe he didn't get to raise me but he installed enough for me in my blood. He thought me a lot during the time I did get to spend with him. I want to honor him and I just want to be a good daughter. I want to help my family who still live here and want to do good things for them. I always had to ask permission to come and see my family and people but I don't like that I had to ask permission to see my family. Now I got my citizenship and I can come and see my family when I want to see my family. I don't want to have to ask permission to come see my people.

Before we conclude our interview, would you please share with us what you have been up to

since your last visit?

Well, I started my own productions, the *she ready* productions. I am putting together TV shows and movies. One of my goals is to come here and make some movies and take the opportunity to give them good line of movies and really get it out in the world. To make sure the world can see how beautiful the people and Eritrea is. We got great stories to tell that the world needs to know about. I also got cartoons coming out. My goal is to one day own my own studio so that people who work with me have a generational wealth.

Well thank you for having us, before we say our good byes, do you have anything to say?

I am so happy my daddy was born here because now I have a place to go, as a citizen of Eritrea, I am happy to be home and I can't wait to keep coming back home and learning more and more to share with the world. The world needs to know how amazing this place is.



Tiffany at the 28th independence carnival show



Visiting the trenches of Nakfa

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY