

SILVER JUBILEE COMMEMORATION OF OPERATION FENKIL CONDUCTED WITH PATRIOTIC ZEAL



Official commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of Operation Fenkil conducted with patriotic zeal at a ceremony in which President Isaias Afwerki, Ministers, Army Commanders, Regional Administrators, senior Government and PFDJ officials and participant from inside the country and abroad took part on the 14th of February 2015.

In the ceremony which has been broadcast live by ERI-TV and the radio, President Isaias said that the big strategic development projects have not been implemented as desired due to other timely priorities, and that a number of water projects are set for implementation in 2015 in the Northern Red Sea region.

Likewise the President said that efforts would be exerted to revive the Hirgigo electric power supply, enable the cement factory increase production to satisfy the supply for development programs, as well as other important development programs in the Northern and Southern Red Sea regions would be incorporated with the strategic developmental projects set for the 2015.

He further indicated that all the necessary endeavors are being exerted to develop the capacity of implementation and make use of the resources available, and called on Government and PFDJ institutions, the Defense Forces, administrations and associations to underpin efforts aimed at reinforcing the participation and increasing awareness of citizens living inside the country and abroad in the na-

tional development programs.

Ms. Tsegereda Woldegeris, Administrator of the Northern Red Sea region, on her part said that the country is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Massawa that has been realized through heavy human and material sacrifice and that currently the city has become the hub of development of the country and the region.

The Administrator further said that the region is ready both in terms of awareness and organization to implement the charted out development programs, and commended all the institutions and individuals for their participation in realizing the great event.

The Silver Jubilee commemoration of Operation Fenkil which has been undergoing from February 12 to 15 in the port city of Massawa, concluded on the 15th of February at Cinema Sigalet with higher patriotic zeal.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Kibrom Andemichael, Chairman of Coordinating Committee of Fenkil commemoration, pointed out that the event was aimed at bequeathing to the young generations the heroic accomplishments registered in the course of the 30-years of armed struggle for independence. He also expressed appreciation for those who made remarkable input as regards organizing the momentous day in a colorful manner.

The representatives of the different exhibition shows featured in connection with the event, indi-

cated that higher spirit of competitiveness among the participants have been witnessed, and that the shows have significant contribution towards upholding national harmony and acquainting the young generation with good societal and national values.

The conclusion ceremony witnessed the staging of traditional songs by Adobha, Gelalo and Afa-bet the sub-zones.

Likewise, Mr. Al-Amin Mohammed-Seid, Secretary of the PFDJ, Ms. Tsegereda Woldegergis, Administrator of the Northern Red Sea region, and Members of the Eritrean community in the Sudanese Red Sea region, handed over awards to government institutions, regional and sub-zonal administrations for demonstrating active participation in the commemorative event.

In other related news, at a community gathering they conducted on 15 February the residents of the port city of Massawa expressed that the Silver Jubilee commemoration of the Operation Fenkil attests to the unity and perseverance of the Eritrean people.

Ms. Negisti Isak and Mr. Jemal Bushira told Erina that said that the 25 years of independence and the economic development registered attest to the unprecedented efforts on the part of the Government, and that the Operation Fenkil remains in the hearts and minds of residents.

Ms. Genet Tiku and Mr. Tareke Desta on their part said that the

dents of the city.

Similarly, participants of the Silver Jubilee commemoration of Operation Fenkil said that the event is an occasion during which nationals should reiterate their pledge to honor the trust of fallen heroes. They further asserted that the overflow of participants witnessed each year in the event attests to the prevalence of patriotic spirit among the citizenry.

Among the participants, Mr. Yonatan Tedros, Ms. Hawa Mahmud and Ms. Weini Netsereab pointed out that development accomplishments registered in the port city attest to the government's commitment to honor the trust of martyrs. They further voiced deep impression as regards the historical significance of the Day, and reiterated readiness to step up participation in State affairs.

VETERAN FIGHTER MAJ. GENERAL AHMED KAKAY PASSES AWAY

Veteran fighter Maj. General Ahmed Omer Mohammed Kakay passed away on February 14 due to illness after receiving medical treatment at the Eritrean Air Force Hospital and abroad.

The funeral service of veteran fighter Maj. Gen Ahmed Omer Mohammed Kakay would be held today Wednesday, February 18th, at Asmara Patriots Cemetery at 10:00 am local time.

The late veteran joined the Eritrean armed struggle in 1968 from Afta area, and served in various capacities before and after independence to his people and country with higher sense of dedication and honesty.

The veteran fighter is married



and father of one.

Expressing deep sorrow over the passing away of Maj. Gen Ahmed Omer Mohammed Kakay, the Ministry of Defense conveys condolence to the bereaved family of the veteran fighter.

Reportage

Fenkil Operation: 25th Jubilee Of The Total Uprooting Of Colonialism

Kesete Ghebrehiwet

A stage in the middle of the sea around inner Massawa, the audience sitting in the coastline, boats and ships creating a beautiful background through an attention grabbing movement just a few meters behind the well set stage which is beautified with palm trees and also the refreshing sea breath intensifies the excitement of the pilgrimages of the silver jubilee of Fenkil Operation who waited keenly to see what is yet to be performed in such enthralling scenery.

A song titled "Memherey" (My Teacher) by Rezene Alem became a pioneer of the shows staged on 14 February 2015 which begun at 4:00 pm. The song is just about the commitment and selfless sacrifice of all Eritrean freedom fighters whose noble deeds are well cherished in the minds of all nationals.

What followed next is a song in Kunama language by Andu Saleh which reflects typically the tradition of the Kunama ethnic group. Five pairs of female and male dancers wearing colorful ornaments and beads of different colors and their full of vigor movement makes one stay engrossed and stay focused on the show.

The well beautified stage stayed worm with the ever flowing works of art. A drama tilted "Meseta Fenkil" is all about a daughter of the fallen hero visits Massawa to celebrate 25th anniversary of her birthday along with the silver jubilee of Fenkil Operation and to commemorate the 25th year of her father's martyrdom who gave his life to liberate Massawa.

The drama also narrates a history of a freedom fighter (father of the daughter) who paid his precious

life to save the life of his fellow but wounded fighter. So, the narrators of such a noble and brave act of such a martyred fighter are his wife who is also a fighter and a survived close friend.

"A fighter weeps but lets his tears flow inwards" are words uttered by the former freedom fighter who is now a mother. Wrapped in deep thought for a while in the course of sharing the history of her husband's bravery to her daughter and the hard to bear loss she continues to feel every moment in her life is what makes her say such heart touching words.

The spirit of the fallen hero also speaks to his daughter saying "My history is the only gift I have for you; cherish it and stay committed to inherit the noble values."

The drama also conveys a positive criticism to the living freedom fighters for not documenting and sharing their experiences about the history of the struggle for independence in which they are part of. Despite being the doers of the heroic feats, they have still remained reluctant in sharing the incidents of matchless war engagements to the world.

Another comic drama which makes the audience burst in to laughter was also performed by two male and female siblings-Nftaliem and Selihom Yewhannes. The musical dram written by Yonas Mihreteab (Minus) is mainly based on the song titled "Abablhatu" by Netesreab Gehbreysus (Wedi Shawl). This song along some conversation lines between the siblings have never let the attention of the audience being deviated. The song by itself is very comic which tells a story about the swift, surprise attacks of the EPLF in different battles in a relaxed and rather entertaining manner.

Bahri- a song by Somlomie



Mharay and another song by Abrhet Ankere were presented to the audience whose eagerness has continued to be intensified with each and every performance.

A song in Arabic language by Sudanese musicians titled "Fenkil" tells a story about the historic Fenkil Operation, about Massawa city and also embraces a theme that reflects the hard to believe bravery of gallant Eritrean freedom fighters. The poem for this song is written by Eritrean Mohamed Al hajj Mussa. The song translates how the fighting and the spirit of the people was? "It gives us a good and strong picture about what happened in the history of this country" said Mohammed Hamid Juar, Sudanese composer.

"Gazatena Fenkil" (Journalist in Fenkil Operation) is also another drama staged in the sea. Documentation activities of fighter journalists and photographers who were professionally forced to tolerate not only bombardments of war planes but also sad sceneries of casualties on civilians are what the drama reflects. The fighters as

well as journalists find themselves in dilemma. They have to capture the war incidents but they are morally touched to spare the lives of injured civilians. If they fail to capture the painful realities of war, there would be no document that would be transferred to future generation thus they reluctantly forced their conscience to adhere to their profession rather than saving lives.

"Are we going to die?" is what one of the two siblings who were severely wounded by the bombardments of war planes said. The elder of the two replied "No, we would not". This is an actual story captured during the war to free Massawa. "We would not die" but we would rather prevail against all odds and stay alive beyond the expectation is the message conveyed thorough this drama. The show continues with the staging of songs and dramas in different Eritrean languages.

President Isaias Afwerki delivers a speech in connection with Fenkil Operation. The President honors all fallen heroes who made

the Fenkil Operation a reality. He said that Glory be to the fallen heroes who played decisive role in over overthrowing and totally destructing the entire colonial roots thus turning the last pages of a chapter towards independence.

The president said "We will never be exhausted to live up to martyrs trust and we would stay committed to secure our pelage to them."

Ms. Tesegereda Weldeghegish, Administrator of Notheren Red Sea region on her part said that Massawa is now witnessing a fish air of independence all the dreadful stories of war and shelling of weaponries are now silent but they are all replaced by development endeavors thanks to the heroic feats of the freedom fighters along the people of Eritrea who made the miraculous operation a reality.

The week of celebrations of the silver jubilee of Fenkil operation which started with the official opening through laying wreaths at the Martyrs Martrys' Monument in Tiwalet on 12th February 2015 continued with presentation of cultural shows, exhibitions among others and with communal gatherings of four administrative areas of Massawa that continued until 15 February 2015.

In the evening hours of 15 February 10 sub-zones of the Northern Red Sea Region were to be awarded for their participation in construction of traditional houses, traditional livelihood, exhibition, and an overall traditional shows they performed in the silver jubilee of Fenkil operation.

Therefore, in the construction of traditional houses and traditional livelihood Nakfa, Afabet, and Ghelalo sub-zones were awarded from first to third respectively. In exhibition, Ghindae, Massawa



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**ERITREA
PROFILE**

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Stimulating Thinking

Aron Hidru

Today's excerpt is taken from Kevin Hogan, Dave Lakhani, Mollie Marti's book entitled 'The 12 Factors of Business Success: Discover, Develop and Leverage Your Strengths' (2008). I am confident it will be helpful and stimulating for the readers of this column.

Why do kids quit or fail to achieve? Think about it. They initially fail at walking, talking, manners, riding a bike, playing a game, making decisions, reading, adding, subtracting—everything. There is nothing a child gets right the first

time.

How the parents and the people in the environment deal with that chronic failure (learning experiences) is, in large part, going to shape that child's potential for success. "If at first you don't succeed try, try again." Did your mom or dad get that one right? If so, you are a lucky one.

Some parents chose to say things like this: "You will never get it right." "You are learning disabled, don't worry about it. No one expects you to do a good job." "You can't do anything right, can you?"

If you heard phrases like these, they were destructive. In large part these statements and the reactions they triggered in you determined your success (or lack of it) as a young adult. Are they still affecting you today?

To avoid criticism, some people stay within their comfort zone or they do precisely what is anticipated and they simply get no negative feedback. People who don't want to get criticized never do anything they don't already know how to do because they don't want to fail. Yet, people who rarely get criticized ultimately fail. Don't fall into this trap.

You work, you love, you play. And you get criticized. It hurts and is embarrassing. That is the real world and you need to accept it in order to excel in it.

No matter the root, criticism hurts a little, hurts a lot, or is excruciating. Can you ever recall a time when someone came straight out with criticism and you said, "Oh yeah, man do I feel better now!" It's not going to happen. We're just like you. We don't like criticism (even constructive criticism), and we don't like rejection.

So just how do you deal with criticism? First, you have to feel your emotions as you hear the criticism.

Don't fight back. Don't shout. Don't scream. Don't leave bloodstains. Breathe. Next, you have to step back from the emotion and determine three things:

1. Was the critic correct in his assessment?
2. Did the critic intend to cause you pain?
3. Do you care about the critic as a person?

Accuracy first. Was he even close to right? Is it possible the evaluation of you or your work has any merit at all? Even a little?

If not, it's unwarranted and it isn't criticism, it's jerkism. Next you have to determine if the person was criticizing you as a person or whatever it was you did. For example, the critic did not like your painting. But, is he saying that you are a bad artist because your painting isn't so great or is he saying this painting isn't so hot? How wide has the net been set? Criticism by people who throw wide nets is rarely worth listening to.

Finally, does the critic truly care about you as a person and do you care about him? People who love us criticize us every day.

Criticism from people who don't shouldn't register on our radar. It's not that the loved one is more accurate. In fact, loved ones tend to be biased against each other in their criticism. But the value of the relationship makes the criticism worth exploring. The criticism of someone who doesn't care is not worth wasting your time on.

If several people in your life have mentioned that you seem to lack purpose or confidence, or you're too timid, abrasive, shy, arrogant or any other unflattering description, ask yourself why they might have this impression of you. If the critic is correct (or close), then try to look at the painful communication as useful. No matter how useful, criticism will always sting. Everyone hates being told they are wrong or lacking in some way.

The reality is that criticism is common along the road to success and most of it is meaningless. When someone has made the decision to start a business or make a change in his life or put himself out in public in some way, criticism is going to follow. Do not give your energy to it or let it stop you in your tracks. Never allow criticism to de-motivate you.

If you want to succeed, you are implicitly asking to be criticized. Accept this as part of your path to success. Because criticism can feel so painful, very few

Mastering Criticism

Part I



people will choose the path that has critics on it. Therefore, the path to achievement is generally a very clear road to travel if you can handle the feelings of rejection and criticism. And, you can!

No one can achieve at a high level if they can't cope in some way with criticism. The greater the number of people you will be seen by, the more you will be criticized. Successful people use criticism as leverage to excel and do better, make a better product, improve service, and make more money. Never again let criticism stand in between you and achievement.

Question: I'm in a fairly high profile position (in the public a lot). I seem to get criticized from all sides—including at live events and in the local press. I have stopped reading the newspaper articles where I'm featured. What else can I do to not let this constant criticism get under my skin?

Face it. When one person writes or speaks about you in a critical way, someone else was thinking the same thing. You are in good company. American presidents rarely garner more than 50 percent of the votes when winning an election. The fact is that the more people know you, the greater the number of people who

will criticize you. This is reality. When you are in the public eye, you cannot escape criticism.

That said, if you continue to listen to your loudest critic, you will fail. Whatever your professional position, your goal is not to please everyone. It's not even to please 50 percent of the people. Your goal is to serve your audience. It is to be your customers' servant. It is to be your friends' friend. It is to be true to yourself.

In business, the most valuable criticism you receive is from those people whom you serve, consult with, or are your most loyal customers. Pay close attention to these voices. They have your best interests at heart just as you have theirs at heart.

When you hear criticism from your customers and clients, you must listen. That does not mean they are right. It means no such thing. It means you listen. When possible, you make the person who criticized you a hero.

You need criticism to succeed. The only way you can never be criticized is to do nothing.

Why are you a target? People tend to criticize when they don't like what you've done for whatever reason and they feel compelled to tell you. There are a lot of possible reasons for the criticism.

Sometimes people think they are teaching you something. Sometimes they want to feel superior to you. Sometimes they want to help you. Sometimes they care about you and don't want you to look bad to others.

People often criticize when they feel their self-esteem threatened. They compare themselves to you and realize that they don't want to discipline themselves to achieve what you have. They criticize to make themselves feel better. It's their idea of unconscious justice.

It sounds like the criticism you receive is more personal in nature. We feel your pain. Each of us is a professional public speaker who speaks before audiences all over the world about everything from sales to negotiation to body language to motivation to leadership. Thousands and thousands of people . . . and sometimes there are people somewhere in the audience that have had a very bad day.

Maybe someone died in their family. Maybe they got yelled at by a spouse. Maybe they got a demotion. Who knows? They vent. They take their pain out on you. It's like playing football. If you don't ever want to get hit, then don't put on a football uniform. If you do, you are going to get hit.



Vacancy Announcement

Bisha Mining Share Company is inviting applicants for the following positions for its Bisha Site Project;

1. Medical Officer Physiotherapist (01)

Major Duties and responsibilities:-

- Perform physiotherapy using modern electronic equipment
- Physiotherapy using Ultrasound
- Electro-Physiotherapy
- Physiotherapy using electronic traction machine
- Document and report outcome of treatment
- Perform basic maintenance care on the physiotherapy equipment
- Participate in other Mine Clinic activities “Team player”

Profile: Qualifications and Experience

Formal Education, Certifications or Equivalents	Registered Physiotherapist in the Ministry of Health with a Diploma in Physiotherapy
Working Experience – Nature & Length	Currently working as a physiotherapist with a minimum of two years of experience. Knowledge of basic modern physiotherapy equipment and documented experience in operating this equipment independently.
Leadership Experience – Nature & length of time	Work experience as a head of a team is plus
Other skills and abilities	Excellent Computer skill with certificate of computer training.

2. Project Controller (01)

Major Duties and responsibilities:-

- Assist with the tracking and management of project within the Technical Service team.
- Report the status of the department project through weekly and monthly reports.
- Assisting with financial tracking of operating and capital expenditure for the department.
- Develop sole source requisitions for projects and service supplies.
- Monitor project expenditure and liaise with the finance department with invoice management.
- Assistance with contractor management documents.
- Assistance with the department budget planning process
- Submit work orders and liaise with the service providers to ensure that the work is completed.
- Assist with the end of month reporting process particularly with projects and department costs
- Maintain accrual cost records and liaise with the Technical Service and Finance team to ensure

that the costs are correctly captured.

- Organize the team travel arrangement, VISA, timesheets, site access requests, and maintaining stock level of office consumables.
- Maintain HR records on file for the department and assist team members with initial HR enquiries.
- Other duties as directed by supervisor.

Profile: Qualifications and Experience

Formal Education, Certifications or Equivalents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of year 12 or trade certificate essential.• Diploma in Business or Business Administration advantageous.
Working Experience – Nature & Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience in project management.• Preferably worked in the mining industry.
Leadership Experience – Nature & length of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not Applicable
Other skills and abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proficient- Microsoft office – excel, word and PowerPoint.• Proficient English (verbal and written).• Demonstrated – report writing (financial).• Excellent time management skills.• Flexible and adaptable.

General Information and other requirements:

- Place of Work: Bisha site.
- Type of Contract Indefinite Period
- Salary: As per Company salary scale.
- Additional requirement for Nationals:
- Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from Ministry of Defense.
- Present clearance paper from current/last employer
- Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card etc.).
- Only shortlisted applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
- Application documents will not be returned to sender and,
- All applications should be sent through the post office.
- Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.

Address: Please mail your applications to;

Bisha Mining Share Company,
P. O. Box 4276 Asmara, Eritrea

Note to Eritrean applicants:

Please send a copy of your application to
Aliens Employment Permit Affairs,
P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea

Chinese Classes To The Public

CI-NCHE is planning to offer more classes for the public who are interested in **learning Chinese language** and longing for **knowing more about Chinese culture**. The registration is scheduled on February 20, 2015 in Room 181, University of Asmara.

There will be some Chinese language classes and Chinese culture classes for the new comers, as follows:

Chinese Language ClassI: Wednesday& Friday, 4pm-6pm.

Chinese Language Class II: Thursday &Friday, 9am-11am.

Chinese Language ClassIII: Saturday&Sunday, 9am-11am.

Chinese Culture Class(Kongfu): Monday to Sunday,3:30pm-5:30pm

Chinese Culture Class(Chinese Song): Monday, 9am-11am.

The people who want to take the Chinese class will have to pay 100 Nakfa for handouts. More information is available for you on working days at Room 179 & 181, University of Asmara. CI-NCHE is expecting you to begin the Chinese Journey with us together.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public that the board of directors of “NOVA AIRWAYS COMPANY LIMITED” on its ordinary meeting held on 10th day of December 2014 resolved that the company decided to establish a local branch in Eritrea and Mr. LUIE HASSAN MOHAMED AHMED ATEEG to be the local branch manager of it.

NOVA AIRWAYS COMPANY LIMITED

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public that “DUBAI AVIATION CORPORATION (FLYDUBAI)” has opened a branch office in Asmara City, State of Eritrea.

A. Name of the company; DUBAI AVIATION CORPORATION (FLYDUBAI).

B. Nationality of the company; United Arab Emirates.

C. The head office of the company is in the Emirate.

D. The capital of the company; 220,000,000.00 Dirhams.

E. The objectives of the company are to engage in the air transportation activities.

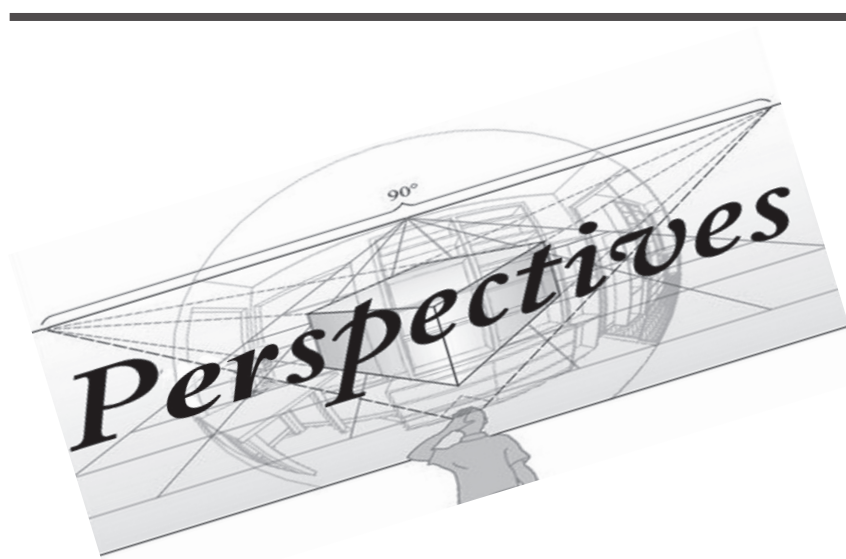
F. Mr. Mohammedin Ahmed Mahmud is the Area Manager of the company.

G. The duration of the company shall be for an indefinite period.

DUBAI AVIATION CORPORATION (FLYDUBAI).



Fenkil: Harbinger Of Total Liberation



How Did 80 People Get Half Of The World's Wealth?

Oxfam reports that just 80 people possess the same quantity of wealth as 3.5 billion others. On RT's Crosstalk, economist Michael Hudson discusses how this happened with Oxfam official Max Lawson and Richard Wellings at London's Institute for Economic Affairs.

Hudson begins, "According to every economics textbook and all the Nobel prizes for the last 40 years, this can't be happening. According to the economics textbooks, the wealthy get rich by adding to production. You earn what you make and they're wealth creators. But in fact what they're producing isn't wealth, it's poverty. And they do this largely because—I think you can think of them as being creditors. They're creditors to the bottom 99 percent that are debtors and renters. If you look at these wealthiest families, there are a number of common denominators: They didn't earn their income, and yet economists only look at how people earn their income. President Obama last week said, "Well, if you have the desire to get rich and you work hard, you can do it." But that's not how these families got their wealth."

Lawson adds, "Our figures show that the top group of people—the 80 people now—and of the billionaires... about a third now inherited their wealth. And that figure's in-



creasing all the time. And this is the point the French economist Piketty made in his famous book last year, that we're rapidly returning to an era that we thought had been consigned to the history books, an era that we associate with The Great Gatsby or maybe Victorian times in Britain where wealth is inherited and all of the things that

come with that. So it's not just the capture of political power in this generation, it's about using your money to shore up the future of your children and your children's prospects. So it really is a kind of ossification of society, if you like, a stratification, which we think is deeply, deeply harmful, because it's ultimately bad for the econo-

my, it's bad for meritocracy. And I agree that it's a problem in the west, it's a problem in rich countries, but I lived for many years in the developing world and it's certainly a problem, for example, in South Africa where I lived, a deep, deep problem of inequality there. It's such an issue that it's now attacking the success that we've seen

in the war on poverty in many of these developing countries, is being threatened by inequality there too. So it's a problem all over the world. It's not just in the U.K. and the U.S., it's a problem as much in South Africa as it is here in London."

By: Alexander Reed Kelly.

LATIN AMERICA: FROM...

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tics, reminiscent of the political repression in Latin America from the 1960s to the 80s. Nepomuceno Moreno, a member of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, was tortured and killed in the state of Sonora while taking part in a caravan for peace. In Chihuahua, assassins killed Ismael Solorio and Manuelita Solis, who were defending water resources against Canadian mining companies. Atilano Roman, the leader of a movement for people displaced by the construction of the Picachos dam, was killed in the state of Sinaloa.

The atrocities in Iguala have increased popular anger, now visible in traditionally apathetic sectors. The survival of the regime is under threat in a previ-

ously unthinkable way. None of the PRI's traditional weapons — co-optation, hostile media coverage, infiltration, provocation, defamation — have managed to contain it. Attempts to buy families' silence, acts of repression, incitements to violence (10), the campaign against Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the main leader of the opposition left, trying to blame him for the violence against the students, and the mainstream media's defence of the president, have only heightened anger and increased the desire for change.

The movement in support of the students and their families took unprecedented action on 10 November and blocked Acapulco's international airport for

more than three hours. This is a major tourist entry point to the country. It is likely that further action will follow, targeting Guerrero's other major airports and motorways.

Mexico's prosecutor general, Jesús Murillo Karam, repeated that Ayotzinapa was an isolated case on 7 November when he was asked if he believed it was a state crime. "Iguala is not the state," he replied. But what happened there shows what this state has become.

RAFAEL BARAJAS AND PEDRO MIGUEL

LE MOND DIPLOMATIQUE,
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Fenkil Operation: 25th ...

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and Foro sub-zones were ranked in order from first to third, while Adobha, Ghelalo and Afabet sub-zones were awarded as first, second, and third respectively.

The awarding event which marked the closing of the silver jubilee of Fenkil Operation were very lively in which all traditions of the country came into one platform. The two-way roads of Sigale inlet were all filled with cheerful dancers and chanting of different traditional songs.

Present in the awarding ceremony were Alamin Mohammed-Saied PFDJ secretary, Tsegereda Weldeghegish Administrator of Northern Red Sea Region, high ranking government officials, army commanders, senior citizens and the inhabitants of the region.

"Gobye Barhir" and "Mekir Dwama" two songs by Estfa-

nos Abrha (zemach) and Sara Teclesenbet were staged in Tigigna and Bilen respectively one after the other. Cultural shows by Adobha, Ghelalo and Afeabet sub-zones were spices of the award event.

The Administration of Northern Red Sea region awarded Alamin Mohammed-Saied, PFDJ secretary. Eritrean community members and NUEW in Port Sudan on their part delivered an award to Ms. Tsegereda Weldeghegish. Mr. Kidane Weldeaslase, Mayor of Massawa, was also awarded by NUEW in Port Sudan.

The overall awards to the 10 sub-zones of the Northern Red Sea Region were delivered by Alamin Mohammed-Saied, PFDJ secretary, Tsegereda Weldeghegish, Administrator of Northern Red Sea Region, and Maj. General Humed Karikare, Commander of Eritrean Navy.



Fortitude: Fenkil and its aftermath



Fenkil was the code name given to the second battle of Massawa which was launched in February 8 1990 and lasted for three days. The First Battle of Massawa took place from 1977 in and around the coastal city of Massawa in Eritrea. The port was besieged by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) against the occupying forces of Ethiopia.

By 1977 EPLF had claimed all of Massawa save the port itself. This included the main road used by the Ethiopian army for the transport of supplies from Asmara. Essentially the garrison was cut off by land and brought under siege.

On 23 December 1977 the EPLF began a strike through an open field towards the salt flats and port. Soviet Naval warships began to shell EPLF held portions of the town to prevent its occupation by the EPLF, especially the downtown areas,^[2] ensuring an Ethiopian victory. This direct Soviet intervention in the war, which lasted up to the last days of Ethiopia's occupation of Eritrea, forced the EPLF in to the famous strategic *withdrawal*,^[3] into Sahel, its strong hold and rear base around the town of Nakfa.

It is the **Second Battle of Massawa** which popularly known is as Operation Fenkil, which took place in February 1990 in and around the coastal city of Massawa that is the subject of this article. This offensive, also dubbed the *Fenkil Offensive*, was conducted by both land and sea by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) against Ethiopia's occupying army.

Beginning on February 8, 1990 the EPLF forces began the offensive by cutting off the critical supply route from Asmara. The surprise attack stunned the Ethiopian regime

and by the following afternoon, the EPLF forces were in the suburbs of Massawa. On the third day of the offensive, February 10, 1990, the EPLF captured the Ethiopian naval base near the town and subsequently the only remaining portion of the city that needed to be rid off Ethiopian troops, the islands.

To achieve this, the EPLF used its nascent naval forces equipped with small gunboats, to attack from sea despite the massive artillery barrage from the Soviet supplied Ethiopian war ships and ground forces. Using their negligent artillery fire and light weapons, the EPLF armor moved onto the causeways that connected the islands with the mainland. The first of these tanks were destroyed by the Ethiopian heavy machinery, however, they were eventually overcome by the EPLF. After this defeat the remainder of the Ethiopian forces retreated to Ghinda.

In an editorial titled "EPLF LIBERATES MASSAWA" in the monthly newsletter of the EPLF published by its foreign relations bureau, European and North American desk, on March 1990, The EPLF gave its side of the story about what happened in Massawa on 10 February 1990 including its assessment of the future of the dergue after that event. Since the editorial reflects the situation that prevailed then very clearly we will quote it in length.

In a dramatic development that bodes ill to Ethiopia's army... the port city of Massawa was liberated on Saturday, February 10, by the EPLF after a three day battle that raged across the entire 200km Ethiopian defence lines.

The liberation of Massawa ... has sent shock waves to the Ethiopian

regime. ... in the indirect address, broadcast by Ethiopian radio on February 22, Colonel Mengistu made to the armed forces and the militia, the colonel admitted that "the capture of Massawa will choke the 2nd Revolutionary Army" and "mean the great downfall of the Ethiopian armed forces",...

Although it was a forgone conclusion that the siege of Massawa was detrimental not only to the fate of Ethiopia's privileged 2nd Revolutionary Army but also to the survival of the Dergue, no one however expected the end to be visible too soon.

The actions of the regime made this clearer. Failing to re-occupy the port city after repeated counter offensives, the regime gave up ground fighting and started to bombard the city along its inhabitants from the skies indiscriminately. On one of the most reckless aerial civilian attacks, the regime showed its disregard for human life in general and the Eritrean lives in particular. To borrow a phrase from the EPLF journal Adulis, "It resorted to blanket bombing of Massawa, spraying the town with napalm bombs" Even after the loss of Massawa, the Ethiopians continued aerial bombardment of the city. The civilian population was hardest hit as the EPLF forces had followed the Ethiopian troops to Ghinda. Notable of this bombardment was that napalm and cluster bombs were used.

The liberation of Massawa limited the regime's capacity to continue its war of occupation in Eritrea any further severely. Massawa was the life line of the regime as all its military supplies from the USSR and food for its armies in Eritrea was brought in through it. This was worsened by the closure of the Asmara Addis Ababa road for more than a year then.

The Ethiopian army which was already in dire logistical situation was indeed "choked" as its supreme commander testified, after the liberation of Massawa by the EPLF. The regime became so desperate to the extent of banning all civilian traffic in Asmara and other occupied Eritrean towns to

save fuel for its military. In Asmara in particular, as Adulis stated, the Dergue "shut down electricity and closed all factories except those essential for its war machinery."

The shameless behavior of the Ethiopians was however exposed when they swiftly changed their target from the advancing EPLF army to the Eritrean people by attacking all the food stores that were in Massawa. The Sunday Times has stated very accurately the way the Ethiopians behaved after their defeat at the hands of the EPLF, in its February 18, 1990 issue;

NOT content ravaging Ethiopia by means of Africa's longest civil war and repeated famines, Menghistu Haile Mariam is trying to subjugate millions of his people by deliberately starving them.

The EPLF journal Adulis however testified to this inhumane action through its first hand information as following;

Ethiopian Mig fighter planes destroyed food ware houses and several industrial and commercial installations in the port city in a blanket bombing that lasted for more than a week.

Indeed the regime was determined in any way to prevent it from being used to its human ends. The Dergue burned all the warehouses in a wanton bombing of the port city of Massawa for an entire week and also attacked relief convoys headed to Tigray from Sudan

Nevertheless, the brunt of the Dergue's brutality was more felt by the civilian people of Eritrea and Ethiopia. A devastating drought has hit Eritrea and northern Ethiopia during the mid-1980s and continued to ravage Tigray and some parts of Eritrea up to the end of that decade. Much of the badly needed food aid from the international community was being channeled through Massawa. The regime was diverting much of this aid to its underfed troops and much more was stored in the port city thanks to the inability of the regime either to transport it or to access the

needy people.

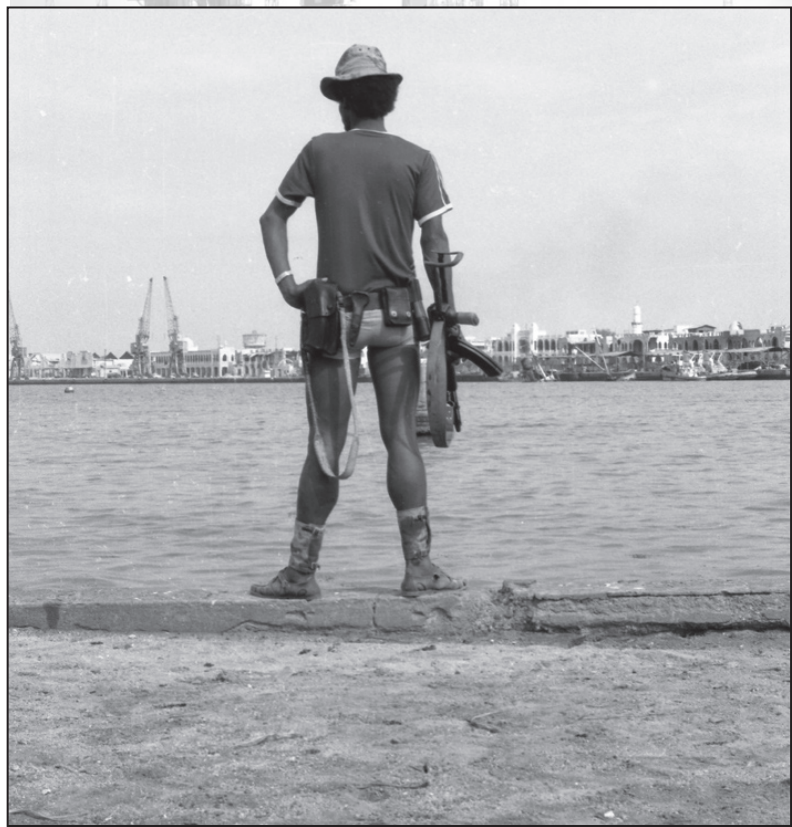
The Battle of Massawa or Fenkil Operation to use its public name was one of the few tasting episodes in the Eritrean revolutionary war of independence that brought the fortitude of the Eritrean people to the fore. On February 10 1990 there was no reason that could have prevented history from repeating itself. In 1978 the Dergue was choked by the EPLF and ELF in the same way it was in 1990. The day was saved for Ethiopia by the appearance of the Soviet Union out of the blue in the scene. This time the odds were tilted against the Eritrean people. An almost half a decade of devastating famine and drought and war that grew to be more brutal than it used to be during the late 1970s has stretched the people's resistance to their limits. The possibility of an unruly intervention from a global power was just a reality looming on the horizon. Indeed this seemed possible when by early 1990 the two superpowers started to negotiate for a joint relief to the Dergue.

Yet the swift move taken by the EPLF and the resilience of the Eritrean people has saved the day for Eritrea this time. Although the commitment of the Soviet Union could have come to help an almost dead and a politically liable friend was too far, the eagerness of some regional powers to save the Dergue in a last ditch attempt by supplying arms indeed did gave it a false hope.

The battle is commemorated by a memorial of three tanks in a War Memory Square built near the city center on Tualud Island by the entrance to the causeway to the mainland in Massawa. In 2004 on the fourteenth anniversary of the battle, the government of Eritrea also issued a set of two stamps and a three-stamp mainsheet honoring the "Liberation of Massawa". Pictured on the 40c was the tank memorial with fountain, on the 50c was a speedboat (gunboat) with fighters on board.

(This essay was prepared for publication in a booklet)

G. Damr





Many a time important events in the global arena are not presented in their entirety in mainstream media as there is lack of context in most of the information they cover. In response, this column sets out to question this trend by presenting diverse perspectives from as many sources as possible with the underlying aim of bringing to fore context that is culturally, historically, politically and economically relevant to any given topic.

LATIN AMERICA: FROM POET PRESIDENTS TO NARCO-STATE

Mexico, a criminal country

Without drug money, the Mexican economy would collapse, which is why politics, economics and gangsterism are entwined at the highest levels. That reality, underlying the students' massacre, has led to a rare display of anger on Mexico's streets.

When a police force arrests 43 students and hands them over to narco-gangsters who kill them as a "lesson", then the police work for a narco-state that entwines organised crime and political power. The same police force also machine-gunned students, killing six and seriously wounding six more; it seized a student, tore the skin from his face, ripped out his eyes and left him lying in the street. This is a narco-state that practises terrorism.

These things happened in Iguala, the third-biggest city in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. The police attacked a group of students from the Ayotzinapa rural teacher training college and are accused of leading them to their deaths. Iguala's mayor, José Luis Abarca, and his wife, María de Los Angeles, who have close links with a cartel in the region, are suspected of ordering this operation. They were arrested on 4 November.

Mexico's rural teacher training centres were established 80 years ago to provide high-quality rural teaching and give young teachers from poor backgrounds the chance to better themselves. But these aims, inherited from the revolution (1910-17), have clashed with the neoliberal economic model adopted since the 1980s. According to neoliberal logic, public education limits the scope to exploit education as a commodity, and the countryside harbours relics of the past (indigenous communities or peasant farmers who stand in the way of expanding export-focused agro-

business). That is why Mexico's 15 remaining rural teacher training centres are under threat, as is evident from budget cuts and the accusation by the media and politicians that they are "seed-beds for guerrillas", according to the former secretary general of the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI), Elba Esther Gordillo (1); havens for "good-for-nothings and delinquents", according to a debate on Televisa (1 December 2012); and "dens of organised crime," as Ricardo Alemán wrote in *El Universal*, 7 October 2014.

The Ayotzinapa students are fighting for their college's survival. They have been topping up meagre state subsidies — \$3.6m a year to cover tuition, accommodation and medical care for just over 500 students, 40 instructors and six administrative staff — through fund-raising. The Ayotzinapa students kidnapped on 26 September had gone to Iguala to organise a fund-raiser. A police witness has revealed that the injured students were made to walk a long distance before being beaten, humiliated, doused with petrol and burned alive. All that remained was ashes, teeth and bone fragments.

Drug money oils the economy

Mexicans have grown used to news of decapitations, group executions and torture, but this story has aroused unprecedented indignation, leading to widespread protests in late November. This proof of terrorism stemming from the way power is shared by politicians and cartels raises troubling questions about the reach of Mexico's narco-state and its capacity for repression.

It also exposes a structural problem: drug money makes the Mexican economy go round. A 2010 US-Mexican study estimated that the cartels are responsible

for an annual cash flow of between \$19bn and \$29bn from the US to Mexico (2). According to Kroll, the leading risk and security consultancy, the figure fluctuates between \$25 and \$40bn (3). So the drugs trade may be the main source of foreign currency revenue, ahead of oil exports (\$25bn) and remittances from expatriates (\$25bn). This money feeds directly into the financial system, which is the backbone of the neoliberal order. Stemming the flow would lead to the economic collapse of the country. Mexico and the narco-economy are mutually dependent.

The alliance between politics and drugs extends throughout the country. Entire regions — including the states of Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Michoacán, Guerrero, Tamaulipas, Veracruz and Oaxaca — are under the cartels' control. They appoint civil servants and police chiefs and cut deals with state governors. Irrespective of the political affiliation of the state's representatives, authority remains in the hands of organised crime. A few weeks ago, a video released by the Knights Templar cartel showed Ricardo Vallejo Mora, the son of the former governor of Michoacán, in relaxed conversation with Servando Gómez Martínez, known as "la Tuta", the godfather of the criminal organisation that runs this state (4). In these regions, organised crime takes its cut, and engages in kidnap, rape and murder with impunity. Inhabitants live in a nightmare, and in some states their only option has been to organise self-defence militias.

There are indications that the narco-state has infected the highest spheres of Mexican political life. No party or region is immune, especially the biggest: the ruling PRI, the National Action Party (PAN) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). The cartels cannot operate with-

out the cooperation of politicians and civil servants at all levels. Money plays a determining role in election campaigns, which also offer an effective means of laundering cash.

President Enrique Peña Nieto of the PRI has been in power since 2012, and there is no direct evidence linking him to organised crime. But during one of the most expensive election campaigns in Mexico's history, the press revealed murky dealings amounting to several million dollars (5). The scandal made waves in Mexico, but the international community stayed silent. It is impossible to measure just how much money Peña Nieto spent to win the election. But on 5 November an electoral commission established that the PRI had spent more than 4.5bn pesos (\$330m, 13 times the legal limit (6)). The commission was unable to investigate many secret transactions that would have produced a higher figure. Officially, no one knows the source of this money, a worry in a country riddled with drug trafficking. In territories dominated by organised crime, the local cartels actively support the PRI (7).

Promises not kept

Promises to tackle narco-trafficking effectively were a key part of Peña Nieto's campaign; he guaranteed results within a year. That was three years ago. Many of the electorate hoped that the PRI's policy would be more effective than that of its predecessor, led by Felipe Calderón, but its security plan is almost exactly the same: the US is watching to ensure its security doctrine is followed. So the murders have gone on. According to a federal government agency, the National Public Security System (SNSP), there were 57,899 wilful homicides during the first 20 months of Peña Nieto's government (8).

The violence from organised

crime tends to relegate the crimes of the state to second place, yet they are far from insignificant. The government claims that the Ayotzinapa killings were an isolated incident. Mexicans have good reason to think otherwise. Peña Nieto, during his time as governor of the state of México in 2006, ordered a crackdown on the citizens of San Salvador Atenco, who had long resisted the seizure of their land for the building of an airport. Many human rights violations were committed, including sexual assaults on female detainees. No charges have ever been brought.

Since Peña Nieto came to power, the prisons have been full of people whose only crime is to have fought for their rights, land or patrimony and defended their families against organised crime. This August, the Nestora Libre committee, a defence organisation for political prisoners, claimed that since December 2012 at least 350 people had been locked up on political grounds (9). In Michoacán, Dr José Manuel Mireles, the founder of a self-defence militia, was arrested with 328 members of his group. In Guerrero, Nestora Salgado, 13 community police officers and four people's leaders who opposed the construction of La Parota dam were also imprisoned. In Puebla, 33 people are behind bars for opposing the building of a highly polluting thermo-electric power station. In Mexico City, Quintana Roo, Chiapas and many other states, it is impossible to count the number of political prisoners. In the states of Sonora and Chiapas, citizens who protested about water privatisation have been jailed, along with those who asked for fertiliser.

Since the start of Peña Nieto's administration, the forces of order have employed dirty war tac-

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Dear readers, should you have any opinion on the column 'Context' and suggestions of articles you think should be printed here please do not hesitate to contact us. We shall welcome, value and entertain them.