

OCHA DELEGATION HOLDS DISCUSSIONS WITH SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS



A United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) delegation led by Ms. Eden Wosornu, Director

of the Response Division, met and held talks on 18 and 19 June with senior Government officials focusing on mutual cooperation

and development programs.

The delegation, accompanied by Ms. Nahla Valji, Resident Coordinator of UN offices in Eritrea, held discussions with Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture; Mr. Yemane Gebremeskel, Minister of Information; as well as Mr. Yemane Gebreab, Head of Political Affairs of the PFDJ.

The objective of the visit of the OCHA delegation was to observe national development priorities and challenges, assess first-hand the impact of climate change, strengthen cooperation modalities, and review program activities.

The delegation also visited nutrition prevention and treatment services in Adi-Tekelezan; a water supply project operating with a solar energy system in Embadorho, Serejeka sub-zone; as well as the Akria National Model of Integrated Organic Agriculture.

GOVERNMENT OF ERITREA DISBURSED OVER 6.2 BILLION NAKFA TO THE FAMILIES OF MARTYRS

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare announced that, from 2004 to 2025, the Government of Eritrea disbursed over 6.2 billion Nakfa in support of families of martyrs.

Noting that the Government of Eritrea began extending support to families of martyrs in 1995, Mr. Zerai Tekleab, Director of Families of Martyrs' Welfare at the Ministry, said that, initially, 10,000 Nakfa was distributed to the families of martyrs for each martyr.

Mr. Zerai went on to say that, following the issuance of Proclamation No. 137/2003, aimed at sustainably extending support to families of martyrs, 500 Nakfa has been distributed monthly to each martyr's family since January 2004.

Mr. Zerai also said that, as part of efforts to enable families of martyrs to become self-supporting, over 27 million Nakfa has been invested in rehabilitating them through livestock and small-scale trade activities.

Regarding the contributions of nationals both inside and abroad, Mr. Zerai said that every national in the



Diaspora has taken the initiative to contribute 720 US dollars over two years, while others have assumed responsibility for permanently supporting individual martyr families.

Mr. Zerai indicated that over the past 22 years, nationals both inside and abroad have contributed more than 202 million Nakfa, benefiting 24,545 families of martyrs.

Noting that nationals inside the country, including students, Government and PFDJ workers, as well as associations, are making valuable contributions to support the families of martyrs, Mr. Zerai called on every citizen to follow this noble initiative.

VARIOUS PROGRAMS IN CONNECTION WITH MARTYRS DAY

Various programs have been conducted in the Central Region in connection with 20 June, Martyrs Day, reflecting the deep meaning of the day as well as the heavy sacrifice paid.

Accordingly, at the program organized by members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 18 June, Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered a speech focusing on the heavy sacrifice paid by the Eritrean people for independence and for safeguarding national sovereignty. The event featured cultural and artistic presentations reflecting the day.

A photo exhibition depicting the atrocities committed by successive Ethiopian colonizers against the Eritrean people from 1962 to 1975 was opened on 18 June in front of the Asmara Municipality office. The exhibition was officially opened by Brig. Gen. Abraha Kasa, head of the National Security Agency. The exhibition will remain open to the public until 21 June.

In the same vein, a walkathon from the Biet-Gergis area to Mai-Dimnet and a commemorative

program were organized by the cooperative association of members of the first round of the national service. The program was attended by Gen. Filipos Woldeyohannes, Chief of Staff of the Eritrean Defense Forces, and other Government and PFDJ dignitaries.

Members of the Ministry of Information and PFDJ in the Central Region organized programs on 16 and 17 June, respectively, in connection with Martyrs Day, featuring various cultural and artistic presentations depicting the deep meaning of Martyrs Day to the Eritrean people.

Members of the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers also conducted environmental sanitation activity at the Asmara Martyrs Cemetery. They also organized a program on 17 June at the Confederation's hall, featuring cultural and artistic performances depicting the day.

Similar programs were also organized by the taxi owners' association in the Central Region and education offices in the region.

PRAYER SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH MARTYRS DAY



Sermons and prayers in commemoration of Martyrs Day, presided by His Reverend Abune Basilios I, 5th Patriarch of the Orthodox Tewahdo Church, was held at St. Michael's Church in Asmara during the mid-morning hours yesterday. The prayer service was attended by religious leaders of the Tewahdo Orthodox, Catholic, and Lutheran Christian denominations.

Merigeta Mulugeta Simon from the Office of the Patriarch,

indicating that the martyrs who paid with their precious lives attested to their love for their people and country, urged citizens



to renew their pledge to live up to their expectations.

Similarly, in the afternoon hours, Salat and Dua services were conducted at the Al-Khulafae Al-Rashideen Grand Mosque, led by Sheik Salem Ibrahim Almuhtar, Mufti of Eritrea.

Sheik Salem Ibrahim, noting that 20 June, Martyrs Day, is a day on which the Eritrean people proudly commemorate their martyrs who brought independence and safeguarded national sovereignty, urged every citizen to strengthen contributions in support of families of martyrs.



Eternal Glory to Our Martyrs!



OPINION

“ንሕና ኮይንና እምበር.....” – The Absolute Measure of Eritrean Resilience

By: Natnael Yebio W.

When independence was finally won in 1991, it marked not merely the redemption of a nation but the profound resurrection of a people who had refused to be erased from history. The atmosphere of those early years was infused with an overwhelming sense of agency—an intoxicating belief that the most arduous chapters of our collective journey had finally been consigned to the past. There existed a sacred conviction that the blood spilled in the trenches of Nakfa had secured a future founded upon absolute sovereignty, dignity, and self-reliance. This fierce pride became the bedrock of modern Eritrean identity, instilling a deep-seated belief that our nation’s destiny would be shaped solely by our own hands, entirely free from the dictates and designs of foreign powers.

It is within this crucible of prolonged waiting and unbroken fortitude that the true weight of the phrase “ንሕና ኮይንና እምበር.....” (“Only because it was us”) reveals itself. It is a reflection born of a proud, sobering realization that perhaps no other people on Earth could have weathered such a tempest and remained standing. It captures the noble trajectory of a society that sacrificed its youth to win freedom, and then seamlessly rose to the occasion

again, sacrificing its peacetime normalcy to protect that freedom. Through the subsequent decades of hostile borders, political encirclement, and external economic conspiracies, the internal fabric of Eritrean society has remained bound together by an invisible yet unbreakable thread of solidarity.

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The sacrifices have been monumental, paid in the collective currency of patience, deferred ambitions, and a youth proudly dedicated to defending their homeland. Yet, beneath this generations-long endurance lies an indestructible core of sovereign dignity—a quiet, fiercely guarded knowledge that, despite every external attempt to break the nation’s stride, we endured simply because of who we are.

On June 20, 1991, the final chapter of the liberation struggle was symbolically brought to a close. The martyrs—formerly known as the Tegadelti, the freedom fighters, the most rebellious spirits ever to challenge oppression on this earth—finally returned home. Their bodies, once buried hastily across the vast battlefields of the liberation war, were reverently gathered and laid to rest within the sacred soil of the nation they had redeemed, met by the tears and eternal gratitude of millions.

Ever since, Eritreans at home and abroad have commemorated Martyrs’ Day on June 20. Candlelight vigils and solemn remembrance services are held annually in honor of their sacrifice. Growing up, children would put aside their football games to light candles and attend patriotic ceremonies. But on what assurance did the younger generations know that these ultimate gifts had truly been given? Only the survivors—the living—could attest to it. To truly understand that a person had laid

down his life for his comrades, one had to hear the testimonies from those who made it back.

These historic martyrs, who voluntarily stared down death and rejoiced in the pursuit of a collective cause, were the Yikealo. Their modern equivalents in the world are none. An aura of beautiful fanaticism surrounds a generation that

deliberately set out to surrender their individual lives for a collective cause—a gigantic sense of pride attractively fused with total self-abnegation.

That remains the quintessential Eritrean way. Walking along Harnet Avenue tonight, one notices that the city is no longer its usual bright, bustling self. Cafés, shops, and cinemas have closed their doors, and the capital has descended into a respectful, solemn darkness befitting a nation in remembrance.

Words are ultimately insufficient to do justice to what these courageous men and women accomplished. Simplicity was but one part of the complex



sum of the Eritrean freedom fighters’ defiance; in their basic, austere lifestyle, they set down the definitive statement of their unique gift for the struggle they embodied. Their acts of bravery leave their people speechless, heartbroken, and intensely proud

all at once. Though no sculpted marble could ever fully capture their memory, nor any engraved stone adequately record their deeds, their legacy will endure as long as the rugged terrain they honored.

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What made this victory against all seemingly impossible odds so miraculous was the stark mismatch between the two opposing forces. On one side stood the best-trained and largest army in Sub-Saharan Africa, heavily equipped with sophisticated weaponry bought at the expense of a starving population. Even a famine of biblical dimensions in Wollo did not deter the Mengistu regime from arming its soldiers to the teeth to fight an unwinnable war.

On the other side were the Eritrean freedom fighters—few in number, but tactical, agile, and resilient to the point of an unyielding, defiant stubbornness. Their resilience during the armed struggle approached a mythic quality; they strode toward the capital with the certainty that sovereignty was within touching distance, pushing forward without a single backward glance.

The enemy scarcely understood what hit them as their conventional armor was dismantled and their naval assets were sunk under the relentless, synchronized attacks of Eritrea’s heroes. To the Tegadelti, every offensive represented a conscious, calculated sacrifice of human life, undertaken only when

endurance. Archival photographs bear witness to young fighters carrying heavy logs and artillery pieces across steep mountain ranges under the merciless Sahelian sun, determined to preserve their blood through sweat.

The enemy advanced with Soviet tanks, Stalin Organs, MiG fighter aircraft, and mountains of state propaganda. Elite formations such as the Kitaw were tasked with punishing the freedom fighters for their insolence. The Nebelbal (Flame) Division was deployed to consume the resistance. The Tewelwari functioned as an aggressive, mobile armored force intended to shatter Eritrean defensive lines. Yet, all disappeared into the annals of history at the hands of Sahel-trained wonders, leaving behind nothing but their grand designs. Uncompromising resistance was the only Eritrean weapon that the enemy truly dreaded.

It was a bitter truth for the Derg regime to accept that these fighters could never be defeated psychologically. When Mengistu Haile Mariam famously shouted at his generals, demanding to know what the Tegadelti possessed that his own army lacked, nobody dared tell him the truth: those young boys and girls in the trenches possessed an inexhaustible supply of ideological conviction, endurance, and moral fortitude.

Those who went to the field to pay the ultimate ransom for Eritrea did not fight conventional military might alone; they fought against hunger, thirst, and diseases that tried their very souls. In life, as in death, they displayed an unmatched discipline—often passing their meager rations to a weaker comrade, their skin scorched by the Sahelian sun and eyes weathered by gun smoke. They stood their ground at Nakfa, redefined the art of conventional warfare at the Battle of Massawa, and eventually marched into Asmara to the euphoric ululations of a liberated people.

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The price of this triumph was felt deeply within the cradle of Eritrean society. Families lost their only children. Brides lost

Continued on page 8

ERITREA PROFILE

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SpotLight

June 20: Honoring Eritrea's Fallen Heroes

Bana Negusse

Last month, Eritreans at home and across the world celebrated the nation's independence. The month was filled with color, festivity, and pride as Eritreans commemorated the hard-won freedom achieved after one of Africa's longest and bloodiest liberation struggles.

May 24 stands as one of the two most significant dates on Eritrea's national calendar. Today, June 20, Eritreans at home and abroad will solemnly observe Martyrs' Day. Across the country and throughout the diaspora, heads will be bowed, candles lit, and flags flown at half-mast as Eritreans honor the sacrifices of the fallen, preserve their memory, and renew their

the rival superpower camps overlapped.

The roots of the conflict lay in the denial of Eritrea's right to self-determination following the Second World War. Although Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia in 1952, largely because of Western geopolitical interests rather than the wishes of the Eritrean people, the federation was gradually dismantled before Eritrea was formally annexed in 1962. Eritreans responded with years of peaceful protest and political resistance, but their appeals to the international community went largely unanswered. As all avenues for a peaceful resolution closed, Eritreans from all walks of life and every segment of society

to reverse their independence, with thousands more giving their lives in defense of the country's freedom and independence.

Martyrs' Day (Mealti Swuat in Tigrinya and Yaum-e-Shuhada in Arabic) was officially designated as a national day of remembrance following Eritrea's liberation in 1991. Indeed, it was the first national occasion commemorated in independent Eritrea. On June 19, 1991, Tegadalay Isaias Afwerki, then Chairman of the EPLF, addressed the Eritrean people at Asmara Stadium in his first major post-independence speech. During the historic event, the EPLF announced that June 20 would henceforth be observed as Eritrea's Martyrs' Day.

the country and throughout Eritrean communities abroad, the candlelight ceremonies transform villages, neighborhoods, homes, and martyrs' cemeteries into powerful displays of remembrance and gratitude.

Students sing songs of resilience and remembrance, often wearing clothing bearing messages that honor the martyrs. Children contribute through their own creative expressions, constructing symbols of sacrifice and patriotism and transforming the ground itself into a canvas upon which they draw maps of Eritrea and other tributes to the nation's fallen. The following day, wreath-laying ceremonies are held at martyrs' cemeteries across the country. At the same time, a nationwide minute of silence is observed at 1:00 p.m., providing an opportunity for collective reflection and remembrance.

June 20 occupies a special place in Eritrea's national consciousness because it provides an opportunity to pause, reflect, and honor those who gave their lives in service to the nation. It is a day to remember the immense sacrifices made by countless Eritreans in the pursuit and defense of freedom, sovereignty, and self-determination. More than a commemoration of the past, Martyrs' Day is a reminder of the debt owed to those whose courage and sacrifice made Eritrea's independence possible.

Yet June 20 is about more than remembrance and respect for the fallen. Perhaps counterintuitively, it is also about inspiration. The sacrifices of Eritrea's martyrs remind us of the importance of holding firmly to our hopes, aspirations, and principles, and of persevering in the face of adversity. Their example demonstrates that even the most daunting challenges can be overcome through courage, determination, and unwavering commitment to a just cause. In this way, Martyrs' Day serves not only as a tribute to those who came before us, but also as a source of guidance and encouragement for present and future generations.

The men and women who fell in the struggle for Eritrea's freedom are remembered not only for the lives they gave, but for the ideals they sought to uphold. Their sacrifices laid the foundation upon which the nation stands today. As such, Martyrs' Day challenges every Eritrean to reflect on how

best to honor that legacy and contribute toward realizing the aspirations for which so many fought and died.

Importantly, remembrance should not be confined to a single day on the calendar. The highest tribute that can be paid to Eritrea's martyrs is to carry forward the values they embodied – dedication, resilience, unity, selflessness, and service to the common good. By striving for excellence, acting with integrity, and contributing positively to our communities and nation throughout the year, Eritreans help ensure that the sacrifices of the martyrs continue to inspire future generations. Freedom was won through immense sacrifice; preserving and strengthening it remains the responsibility of all.

The legacy of Eritrea's martyrs extends far beyond the battlefield. Their sacrifices secured the nation's independence, but they also left future generations a powerful example of courage, resilience, unity, and selflessness. Eritreans from every region, faith, ethnic group, and social background united in pursuit of a common goal, demonstrating what can be achieved when a shared sense of purpose guides a people. As time passes and fewer Eritreans have direct memories of the liberation struggle, preserving the stories and lessons of the martyrs becomes ever more important. Remembering their sacrifices is not only about honoring the past; it is about ensuring that the values they embodied continue to inspire and guide the nation in the future.

Throughout the year, Eritrea's flag flies proudly across the nation. It can be found raised high above homes, schools, offices, and public squares as a symbol of the country's hard-won freedom and sovereignty. On Martyrs' Day, however, those same flags are lowered to half-mast in solemn remembrance of the men and women who gave their lives in service to the nation. Today, as Eritreans gather to honor their memory, reflect on their sacrifices, and renew their commitment to the ideals for which they fought, they are reminded that independence was neither inevitable nor free. It was won through extraordinary courage, perseverance, and sacrifice.

The Eritrean flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.



commitment to the values for which so many gave their lives.

The significance of this day cannot be overstated. Without the sacrifices remembered on June 20, there would be no independence to celebrate on May 24. Martyrs' Day serves as a powerful reminder that Eritrea's freedom was won at an immense cost and that the responsibility to safeguard that legacy belongs to every generation.

Between 1961 and 1991, Eritreans waged one of the longest and bloodiest liberation struggles on the African continent, fighting against successive Ethiopian regimes backed and armed first by the Western powers and later by the Soviet bloc. In an extraordinary and largely unprecedented development, Ethiopia even received support from both sides of the Cold War, with a period during which assistance from

increasingly rallied to the cause of national liberation, determined to resist occupation, defend their rights, and secure self-determination. Ultimately, with peaceful options exhausted, the armed struggle for independence was launched.

Over the next three decades, Eritreans fought a largely self-reliant war marked by dramatic reversals, immense hardship, and extraordinary sacrifice. Tens of thousands of fighters and civilians lost their lives before independence was finally achieved in 1991. Virtually every Eritrean family was touched by the war, with loved ones serving on the front lines, supporting the struggle, enduring displacement, or making the ultimate sacrifice. In the years that followed, Eritreans were again called upon to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity against external aggression and efforts

The date was chosen to honor the many Eritrean fighters who, on June 20, 1982, helped bring an end to Ethiopia's sixth offensive against the Eritrean liberation movement. Known by the Derg regime as the Red Star Campaign, the offensive was launched with great fanfare and considerable military resources in an effort to "crush once and for all" Eritrea's armed struggle for independence. Instead, it became another chapter in the long and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to subdue the Eritrean people's determination to achieve freedom.

Today, Martyrs' Day stands as one of Eritrea's most solemn and widely observed national commemorations. During Martyrs' Week, the nation is illuminated by candlelight as Eritreans of all ages participate in vigils honoring the fallen heroes and heroines of the struggle. Held on the eve of June 20 across



A Living Museum of Courage and Freedom

By: Irdi Issaias

Every nation observes its sacred dates, but for Eritrea, June 20th is far more than a marked day on a calendar. It is a profound moment of national introspection that demands we inherit not just the history, but the immortal spirit of our fallen heroes. The



era of our liberation struggle was defined by remarkable feats of human endurance that have few equals in global history. It was a transformative crucible that reshaped the very fabric of our society, forging the core values that underpin our ongoing journey toward development and self-reliance: perseverance, unyielding dedication, flawless integrity, vigilance, gender equality, and cultural unity.

For those seeking a tangible manifestation of these revolutionary pillars, the trenches of Sahel stand as the ultimate reference point. Chosen as the name of Eritrea's national currency for its profound historical and psychological weight, Nakfa serves as an open-air museum of the immense price paid for our liberty.

According to oral history, the name Nakfa is derived from the local term Naqf, which translates to "high above"—a fitting testament to its lofty altitude. True to its name, Nakfa's mountain fortress holds an elevated position in the history of the Eritrean people's struggle. Liberated on March 23, 1977, Nakfa never fell back into the hands of the Ethiopian occupying forces. Throughout the bitter years of conflict that followed, it stood defiant as the heart of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and an unbreakable symbol of national resilience.

As the repressive rule of the occupying Ethiopian regime

intensified, the lives of ordinary Eritreans became inextricably intertwined with the struggle for independence. Spurred by a unified collective consciousness, citizens from all walks of life stepped forward to join the EPLF. This mass mobilization galvanized the revolution, transforming a localized

resistance into a disciplined, unstoppable front.

Hoping to crush this awakening permanently, the Dergue regime launched massive, successive waves of strategic offensives. Armed with overwhelming numerical superiority, heavy conventional weaponry, and foreign military advisors, the enemy was confident of a swift and decisive victory.

Sun Tzu, the ancient Chinese strategist, wrote in *The Art of War* that superior numbers and overwhelming firepower dictate the outcome of battle. However, Mao Zedong took a different view, arguing that the ultimate strength of a nation lies not in its material military might but in the resilience of its people. This philosophical distinction came to life on the battlefields of the Sahel.

The Nakfa trenches hosted a literal clash between these two opposing ideologies of war. Despite being vastly outnumbered and outgunned, the Eritrean freedom fighters emerged as an immovable force through their psychological and moral resolve. Led by a highly strategic and unified leadership, they countered raw firepower with tactical brilliance, unmatched comradeship, and mutual sacrifice. Through this unyielding commitment, Nakfa emerged as the global epicenter of steadfastness.

Built with meticulous wisdom, the Nakfa trenches

were engineered to shield the precious lives of the freedom fighters while systematically exhausting the enemy's fighting spirit. The construction of these sprawling subterranean networks served as an immersive school of military engineering. These defense networks enabled individual liberation fighters to master the entire architectural process—from the initial design and excavation to the strategic positioning and camouflage of complex defensive structures.

Strategically adapted to the rugged topography, the communication trenches ran in a precise, sharp zigzag pattern. This deliberate geometric design was of paramount strategic importance: it completely restricted the enemy's line of sight, neutralized direct firing lanes, and contained the blast radius of incoming artillery shells.

Furthermore, these fortifications accounted for real-time enemy visibility and the sheer steepness of the mountain peaks. The design of these canals was purposefully constructed to serve highly specific functions. Alongside the primary trenches, narrow secondary canals were carved out, which the freedom fighters referred to as "Jubas" (pockets). These pockets featured incredibly narrow observation slits facing directly toward the enemy lines, meticulously engineered to monitor the movements of the occupying forces without exposing the defenders to sniper fire.

The trenches nurtured a profound culture of comradeship—a relationship that transcended ordinary friendship. It was a bond forged among freedom fighters from vastly diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, united by a single denominator: the fierce willingness to lay down one's life for a comrade. This unbreakable bond is perfectly captured by the iconic Tigrinya proverb, "እኩዋን ብሰሙር፡ እዕጸው ብዋሙር" ("Brothers united are like a bundled wood—unyielding and unbreakable").

This physical and psychological proximity to the conflict is starkly reflected in the descriptive, highly vivid nicknames given to the primary outposts along the defensive line: Testa (Header), positioned just a few meters from

the enemy barracks, named for its direct, high-stakes head-to-head combat. Rigole (Penalty Spot), a forward position located so close to the enemy lines that defenders could clearly hear the Ethiopian soldiers talking and call them out by name. Volleyball earned its legendary name due to its terrifying proximity; incoming enemy grenades were routinely caught mid-air by hand and hurled back before they could explode.

While conventional military history frequently highlights the close-quarter trenches of the Gallipoli campaign in World War I (where the Turkish Quin outpost sat 15 meters from British lines) or the seven-meter gap at Belgium's Zonebeke barracks on the Western Front, Nakfa's outposts often collapsed these distances even further. More uniquely, while European trench warfare was defined by prolonged, stagnant stalemates, Nakfa was characterized by constant, high-intensity, fluid warfare.

To construct these mountain citadels, freedom fighters manually harvested local raw materials under the cover of night—utilizing heavy stones, large trees, and salvaged railroad iron sheets twisted by bombardment.

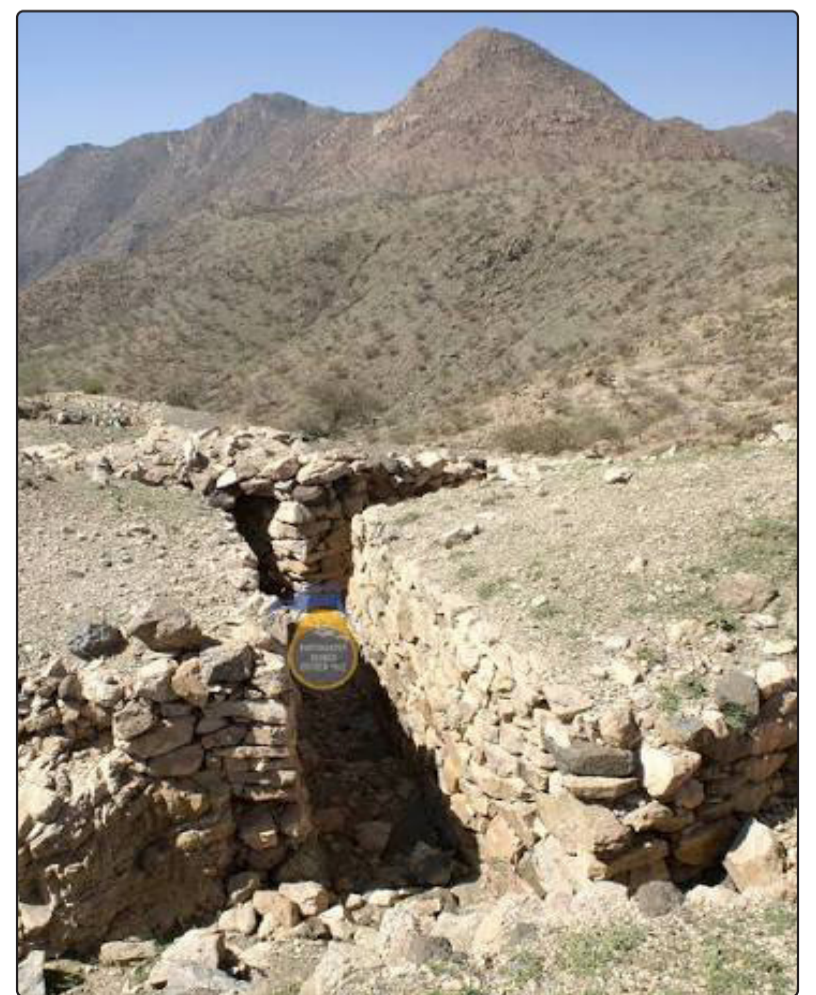
As we commemorate this solemn Martyrs' Day, we recognize our shared national

responsibility to safeguard these historic forts. Meticulously preserved to withstand the test of time, this storied heritage is uniquely poised to become a premier destination for global historical tourism. Nakfa remains an open-air classroom where students can delve into the true meaning of freedom, authors can find profound creative reference, and researchers can conduct cutting-edge historical studies.

Standing before these silent stone walls today, the visitor feels an eerie, reverent familiarity wash over them. It is as if the quiet stones still whisper tales of unparalleled heroism. The echoes of absolute honesty, diligence, ingenuity, and unshakeable patriotism that shaped Nakfa's history resonate deeply into the present. It is a living monument to the all-encompassing price paid for liberty, and every citizen carries a moral obligation to pay a personal pilgrimage to this sacred ground.

Ultimately, Martyrs' Day is a timeless testament to the enduring legacy of our freedom's greatest architects. June 20th is forever etched in our collective memory as a reminder to live out the values our fallen heroes embodied actively. It is a day that demands we inherit not just their history, but their unyielding spirit.

Eternal Glory to Our Martyrs!



SpotLight

Eritrea's Journey in Promoting Safe and Voluntary Blood Donation

By: *Lwam Kahsay*

International Blood Donation Day was observed on June 14th at an event held at the conference hall of the National Union of Eritrean Workers in Asmara. Held under the theme "One Drop of Humanity. Give Blood. Save Lives," the event underscored the vital importance of voluntary blood donation in saving lives and strengthening the healthcare system. The event featured numerous activities aimed at raising awareness about the significance of blood donation, promoting safe practices, and encouraging community participation. The core message emphasizes the indispensability of voluntary blood donation in ensuring the availability of safe and sufficient blood supplies for all medical needs across the country.

Blood donation has long been a noble and integral part of Eritrea's history, particularly during its struggle for independence. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) regarded blood donation as a patriotic act, vital for the health and resilience of fighters and civilians. The Eritrean Blood Transfusion Center was initially established during the armed struggle in the liberated area of Ararib-Orotta. In those early days, the center relied on solar-powered refrigerators to store donated blood, exemplifying resourcefulness and dedication amidst challenging circumstances. Blood transfusion became a crucial component of the liberation struggle as injuries sustained during combat often resulted in severe bleeding. Combatants were obliged to donate blood whenever possible, emphasizing the importance of collective effort and solidarity.

After Eritrea won independence



in 1991, the government continued to uphold its long-standing strong commitment to providing effective and

equitable healthcare services. One way the commitment has been demonstrated is through the establishment of a fully equipped Eritrea's National Blood Transfusion Center (NBTC), which is also known as the National Blood Bank, near the Orotta National Referral Hospital in Asmara. The establishment of the center at the heart of the capital was a significant achievement, facilitating efficient management, quality assurance, and timely distribution of safe blood to hospitals across Eritrea's six regions.

The blood transfusion center is equipped with advanced machinery and highly qualified personnel, reflecting the country's dedication to maintaining high standards in blood safety and quality. It has international recognition, earning certificates of compliance with quality control standards in 2010 and 2013. These awards underscore Eritrea's commitment to ensuring that every unit of blood processed follows rigorous safety and quality standards, thereby safeguarding patients from transfusion-transmissible infections (TTIs).

The primary objective of NBTC is to provide safe and sufficient blood for all health interventions nationwide. This includes blood for surgeries, childbirth, trauma care, chronic diseases, and emergency situations. The center aims to eliminate complications arising from blood shortages or unsafe transfusions, thereby reducing morbidity and mortality rates associated with blood-related health issues. The center's mission emphasizes collecting blood predominantly through voluntary donations, fostering a culture of altruism and community responsibility. To this

end, the National Voluntary Blood Donation Association of Eritrea (NVBDAE) was established in 2013. The association works

hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Health to help increase the number of regular donors.

Since its inception, NVBDAE has been instrumental in promoting blood donation. Its main goal is to educate the society about the importance of voluntary blood donation, dispel myths and misconceptions, and establish



a culture of regular, altruistic donation. The association started with a small group of donors who donated blood three to four times annually. Over time, the number has grown significantly, with membership from 64 government and non-government institutions across the country. The expansion of the association's network into all six regions, and their respective sub regions, has been helpful in addressing shortage of blood at local levels. This approach ensures that hospitals and health centers in rural and underserved areas also have access to safe blood, reducing delays and complications in medical treatments. The association's efforts have contributed to increased voluntary donations, which are crucial for maintaining a steady and safe blood supply.

Blood transfusion is a cornerstone of modern medicine, essential for saving lives and improving health outcomes. It is used in various medical procedures, including surgeries, childbirth, trauma management, cancer treatment, and chronic illnesses. However, improper use or unsafe practices in blood transfusion can lead to serious health risks, including transfusion reactions and transmission of infectious diseases such

as HIV, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV), and other TTIs. Recognizing these risks, the World Health Organization has issued comprehensive guidelines to promote safe blood transfusion practices. NBTC and NVBDAE have adopted these guidelines, emphasizing public health education, rigorous donor screening, and safe collection

consistent, safe blood supply.

Looking ahead, the government and NVBDAE plan to strengthen community awareness, expand regional networks, and enhance donor retention programs. They aim to further improve the quality of services, incorporate new technologies, and align with international standards to safeguard public health. The

expansion of healthcare facilities and services has increased demand for modern medical procedures, making a reliable blood supply more critical than ever.

The celebration of International Blood Donation Day in Eritrea highlights the nation's progress in establishing a safe, sustainable, and community-driven blood donation system. From its humble beginnings during the liberation struggle to the sophisticated facilities of today, Eritrea has demonstrated a strong commitment to public health and community well-being. The collaborative efforts of NBTC and NVBDAE have significantly increased voluntary donations, improved blood safety standards, and reduced reliance on replacement donations by family members of patients that need blood transfusion. As Eritrea continues its pursuit of sustainable development goals, ensuring access to safe blood remains a vital priority. The country's dedication to promoting voluntary blood donation, coupled with advancements in technology and quality assurance, paves the way for a healthier future where every life saved reflects the collective effort and altruism of its people.

procedures. The donor suitability assessments carried out include medical interviews, physical examinations and counselling that aim at selecting low-risk donors who are noble and motivated by humanitarian concerns.

To ensure safety, all blood units are tested for infectious agents that can be transmitted through transfusion. The screening process includes testing for HIV-1 and HIV-2, HBV, HCV, and other pathogens. Maintaining donor anonymity is also a key feature of Eritrea's blood donation system, protecting donors and recipients alike. The center's strict adherence to safety protocols has contributed to Eritrea's reputation for safe blood transfusion services. In three years, 2022-2024, NBTC collected more than 10,000 blood units. In 2025, the blood collected from voluntary donors all over the country was 16,000 units. Voluntary blood donation now accounts for around 99% of the demand, a reflection of the progress made in establishing a sustainable blood donation system in Eritrea. The association's ultimate goal is to achieve 100% voluntary blood donation, eliminating reliance on replacement donations by family members of patients that need blood transfusion. and ensuring a



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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Position: Artisan Boilermaker
Department: Processing and Underground Operations
Section: Asheli Underground
Number required: One (01)

Primary Purpose

- To safely install, maintain, repair, and fabricate industrial machinery and metal components, ensuring equipment operates safely, efficiently, and with minimal downtime. This role combines precision mechanical work with welding and fabrication skills to assemble, align, strengthen, and restore equipment in industrial environments.

Essential Function

- Fabricate and assemble metal components according to specifications
- Perform routine maintenance and inspections
- Train and mentor national operators to improve competency
- Ensure compliance with all safety, operational, and environmental procedures
- Maintaining tools and equipment in good working condition
- Documenting work completed and reporting issues.

TASK DESCRIPTION EXPANDED TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREAS

Fabrication & Assembly

- Read and interpret blueprints to determine project requirements
- Measure, cut, bend, and shape metal materials
- Assemble parts using welding and fastening techniques

Installation & Maintenance

- Perform preventive and corrective maintenance
- Diagnose faults and carry out repairs
- Inspect completed work to ensure compliance with specifications

Equipment Operation and Care

- Operate welding machines, cutting tools, and lifting equipment
- Maintain and service tools regularly

Training and Mentorship

- Provide hands-on training and coaching to national operators
- Support competency development and skills transfer
- Act as a role model in performance and behavior

Communication and Coordination

- Maintain clear communication with supervisors and team members
- Provide accurate feedback on production and equipment performance

Unique requirements/other information

- Candidate must be physically medically fit.
- Ability to work in physically demanding conditions (lifting heavy materials working at heights or confined spaces)
- Exposure to heat, noise, and industrial environments
- Compliance with industry-specific regulations and standards.

Qualifications:	Knowledge and Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 12 Trade Certificate in Boiler making or equivalent (recognized technical/vocational qualification) Valid welding certifications (e.g., SMAW, MIG, TIG) are advantageous Previous experience working in an expat or developing workforce environment (preferred) Trainer/Assessor certification (advantageous for expat role). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 5+ of relevant boiler making or metal fabrication experience Knowledge of workplace safety regulations and procedures Experience working in a multicultural or developing workforce environment Awareness of mechanical systems and equipment maintenance
Technical Skills	Behavioral Skills

- Welding (arc, MIG, TIG, gas welding)
- Cutting and shaping metals using tools (plasma cutters, oxy-acetylene torches)
- Assembly and installation of large metal structures
- Basic rigging and lifting techniques.
- Strong safety-first mindset
- Effective communication across language and cultural barriers
- High level of accountability and professionalism.
- Drive and enthusiasm
- Team-oriented with the ability to influence and coach others
- Proactive and solution-focused approach

2. Position: HME Drill Mechanic

Department: Mining
Section: HME-Maintenance
Number required: One (01)

Primary Purpose

- You will be responsible as a Drill Maintenance Mechanic for the maintenance, repair, and troubleshooting of various types of mine drills used in mining operations. You will play a crucial role in ensuring minimal downtime of machinery and contribute to the efficiency and safety of our mining/construction projects. To execute all work according to BMSC safe work rules and procedures.

Essential Function

- Safety targets achieved, SOP requirement achieved
- Production Targets, availability, met (Costs maintained within budget)
- Local manpower development on the job and Health, Safety and Environment
- Reporting and Additional Duties.

TASK DESCRIPTION EXPANDED TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREAS

Planning

- Follows the "Planned Maintenance Schedule".

Implementation of the Plan

- Identify the highest priority for each day and focus on completing relevant tasks.
- Ensures good housekeeping.
- Carries out actual maintenance and repairs of Drill Rigs in an efficient and effective way to minimise downtime.
- Performs regular inspections to detect potential problems before they cause breakdowns.
- Minimises downtime by ensuring the best techniques are being used to repair breakdowns.
- Ensure safety requirements are fulfilled at the workplace, including leading Field Level Risk Assessment (FLRA) and proper use of the appropriate PPE. Report any safety issues/incidents.
- Comply with mine's cardinal rules and other safety, environmental or other rules and standards as directed. Identifies any hazards in the workplace.
- Conducts preventative maintenance on the Drill Rigs by checking engines; motors; pneumatics; hydraulic systems by following diagrams, sketches, operation manuals, manufacturer's instructions and engineering specifications. Troubleshooting malfunctions.
- Carries out "Fault finding" by using precision measuring and testing instruments.
- Removes defective parts by using hoists, cranes and hand and power tools. Examines form and texture of parts to determine causes of failure.
- Determines changes in dimensional requirements of parts by using rulers; callipers; micrometres; and other measuring instruments.
- Understands and is familiar with basic hydraulic systems.
- Attends technical and other training as required by supervisor.

Writing Reports & Data Control

- Compile daily; progress reports as requested
- Completion of job cards and works orders.

Unique requirements/other information

- Candidate must be physically medically fit

Continued on page 7

Qualifications:	Knowledge and Experience
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public that China Coal No 3 Construction Corporation (Group) LTD is in the process of incorporating as Branch Company in Eritrea.

- The office of the branch company is in Asmara.
- The authorized capital of the company is 1,646,601,900 Yuan (one thousand six hundred forty six million six hundred one thousand nine hundred Yuan).
- The company is authorized to perform work of Mining business as per the Eritrean laws and practice.
- Mr. Qi KUN is the General Manager of the Company, he is authorized to act on behalf of the company.
- The Company is in the process of registering the branch company for unlimited time or until replaced by another form of a company or continuity of the work is not possible.

China Coal No 3 Construction Corporation (Group) LTD



- Must have formal training as HD Mechanic and record of Blast Hole Drills experience.
- Must be a holder of his country vehicle license.
- Proven troubleshooting abilities and experience working with diagnostic tools will be advantageous.
- formal CAT drill training will be advantageous.
- Minimum 5 years relevant experience on blast hole drills on an open pit mine site
- Acceptable knowledge of mining site safety and work execution.

Continued from page 6

Technical Skills	Behavioral Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Literacy (MS Office – Intermediate) • Must be able to read technical drawings and diagrams • Must have hydraulic fault-finding training and Supervisory experience • Mechanical & Electrical experience on blast hole drills • Problem solving skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (English) • Assertiveness • Interpersonal Relations • Integrity and Prioritizing skills & multi-skilling • Ability to work towards strict deadlines • High level of accuracy and Discretion • Self-motivation and Attention to detail • Analytical skill and Problem-solving skill.

Position: Primary Excavator (PE) Mechanic

Department: Mining

Section: HME-Maintenance

Number required: One (01)

Primary Purpose

- Responsible for mechanical activities to maintain and repair HME Primary Excavators (PE).

Essential Function

- Ensure the upkeep of the PE fleet to maximize operational reliability and availability

TASK DESCRIPTION EXPANDED TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREAS

Planning

- Follows the daily and weekly schedules
- Ensure all planned Backlog work is completed in timely manner

Implementation of the Plan

- Comply to set priority for each day and focus on completing relevant tasks in professional manner.
- Maintain consistent good housekeeping practices.
- Focus on solutions to improve KPI,s of HME Primary excavator fleet in an efficient and effective way to minimise downtime.
- Conduct regular inspections to proactively identify potential issues before they result in breakdowns.
- Optimize downtime by employing the best techniques for repairing breakdowns.
- Ensure strict adherence to safety protocols in the workplace, including leading Field Level Risk Assessments (FLRAs) and using appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Promptly report any safety incidents or concerns.
- Comply with mine’s cardinal rules and other safety, environmental or other rules and standards as directed. Identify and report workplace hazards.
- Perform preventive maintenance through routine inspections, fluid checks and component replacements to prevent breakdowns and prolong equipment lifespan.
- Troubleshoot complex mechanical, hydraulic, and electrical problems utilizing advanced problem-solving skills and technical expertise to identify root causes and implement effective solutions.
- Replace defective components using hoists, cranes, hand tools, and power

tools.

- Determines changes in dimensional requirements of parts by using rulers; callipers; micrometres; and other measuring instruments.
- Understands and is familiar with basic hydraulic systems.
- Attends technical and other training as required by supervisor.

Reporting

- Compile daily progress reports as requested (completing Job Cards).
- Identify and Report any Hazard in the workplace.
- Promptly report any safety concerns.

Training

- Engage proactively in training initiatives and actively share knowledge with fellow national team.
- Offer consistent mentorship and guidance to fellow members of the national team.
- Collaborate with colleagues to troubleshoot complex issues and brainstorm effective solutions.

Unique requirements/other information

- Candidate must be physically medically fit.

Qualifications:	Knowledge and Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have formal training as HD Mechanic and record of Primary Excavator experience. • Must be a holder of his country vehicle license • Proven troubleshooting abilities and experience working with diagnostic tools will be advantageous. • Formal CAT Excavator training will be advantageous. (CAT6018, CAT6020, CAT6030, CAT6040). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 5 - 10 years of experience in Heavy Mobile Equipment maintenance within a mining environment, with at least 5 years specifically in this role AS Primary Excavator Mechanic. • Proficiency in technical mechanical, hydraulic, and electrical skills. • Experience working with the following: Cat 6018, Cat 6030, Cat 6040 Excavators • Acceptable knowledge of mining site safety and work execution.

Technical Skills	Behavioral Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Literacy (MS Office – Intermediate) • Attention to detail & Analytical skill • Mechanical, Hydraulic & Electrical experience • Problem solving / Fault finding skills • Cat SIS / Cat ET • Hydraulic pressure testing and adjusting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (English) • Assertiveness • Prioritizing skills & multi-skilling • Ability to work towards strict deadlines • High level of accuracy • Self-motivation • Team player. <p>Address: Please mail your applications to:- Bisha Mining Share Company, P. O. Box 4276 Asmara, Eritrea</p> <p>Note to Eritrean applicants: Please send a copy of your application to: 1. Aliens Employment permits Affairs, P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea. 2. Mineral Resources Management P. O. Box 272 Asmara, Eritrea</p>

General Information and other requirements:

- **Place of Work:** Bisha.
- **Salary:** As per Company salary scale.
- **Type of Contract:** Indefinite

Additional requirements for Nationals:

- Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provided evidence of release paper from the 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 will be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
- Application documents will not be returned to sender.
- All applications should be sent through the post office.
- **Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.**

SpotLight

Martyrs' Day: Eritrea's Sacred Monument

By: Kidane Shimendi

Martyrs' Day is Eritrea's sacred monument built in the patriotic hearts of the people. On June 20, Eritreans at home and in the diaspora honorably observe the day to honor the heroes and heroines who sacrificed their precious lives in the thirty-year war for liberation and in defending the sovereignty of the country.

This sacred monument is built with precious national values of resilience, unity, comradeship, self-reliance and equality. The values have been serving as a guiding principle in the war of liberation and in the ongoing process of nation building.

June 20 was chosen to be Martyrs' Day in recognition of the big number of Eritrea's freedom fighters who fell to defeat the Ethiopian army in its sixth offensive in 1982. Dubbed the "Red Star" by the Dergue, the campaign took two years of extensive preparation heavily backed by great external powers. Its aim, which was declared with a lot of fanfare and bravado, was "to crash the Eritrean struggle once and for all."

As per the plan, the enemy began its sixth offensive attack on February 15, 1982 and continued uninterrupted for months. Eritrean freedom fighters successfully repelled the offensive, bringing it to an end on June 20 and proving to the Dergue and the world at large that Eritrea's struggle would inevitably triumph. Eritreans' victory became possible only because they fought with determination, sacrificing their dear lives.

June 20 was declared as Martyrs' Day at a historic public gathering at Asmara Stadium on June 19, 1991, following Eritrea's liberation on May 24, 1991. Then martyrs' cemeteries were built across the country to lay to rest remains of Eritrea's heroes that had been buried at graves near battle grounds during the armed struggle for independence.

To honor Martyrs' Day, a picture of a lit candle, a rolled sheet of cloth and shida (plastic sandal) is displayed on street walls and T-shirts like a sacred monument. The three elements have symbolic meanings



associated with martyrs.

A. A lit candle – As a lit candle gives light by melting down and eventually disappearing, freedom fighters deliver freedom and peace through their suffering and martyrdom.

B. A rolled sheet of cloth – A valuable property of freedom fighters, a rolled sheet of cloth accompanied them wherever they went. They used it as a blanket to get warm when they took rest, as protection from rain, as a bag to carry supplies, as a bandage for themselves or their comrades during emergencies, and as a cover when they are buried as martyrs.

C. Shida (plastic sandal) – A regular shoes of freedom fighters, shida provided protection against harm as freedom fighters marched across several battle grounds, trenches, mountains, and rough terrains. The fighters kept on repairing their shida so that it could serve them for as long as possible.

Another symbolic representation of Eritrea's martyrdom is the certificate of martyrs. Certificate of a martyr hanging at the wall of a home of a family whose member has been martyred is a common sight in Eritrea. The certificate, which bears the name, photograph,

and when and where the hero had fallen, is often placed at a conspicuous place in the living room.

On Martyrs' Day, parents and their children sit in a circle with a lit candle illuminating a martyr's certificate or photo. Children learn the sacred values of martyrdom from their parents, in the process becoming aware of their national history and identity.

On the eve of June 20 a candlelight vigil is held to honor and remember the martyrs. In the evening, street lights are turned off and people walk in a procession holding lit candles all the way to Meskerem Square, where the official vigil is held. Students honor the day by singing songs of resilience, unity, comradeship, determination and love of nation they were taught at school. Many wear shirts bearing the picture of a lit candle, shida and a rolled sheet of cloth.

Religious institutions give memorial service. In Asmara, this is done at St. Michael's church and Al-Khulafae Al-Rashideen grand mosque. Various other activities are organized to honor Martyrs' Day, including visiting veterans' cemeteries, taking part in candlelit vigils, singing songs, reciting poems, narrating heroic stories of the martyrs, assisting children and parents of the

martyrs and planting trees. The day also serves as an occasion for Eritreans to renew their oath to look after families of martyrs and continue to play their part in developing their country.

The unwavering national spirit that guided our freedom fighters who gave their lives

has put Eritrea in its rightful place. As a sacred day that historically evolved from the significant victory of the Eritrean revolution against the Dergue's sixth offensive, June 20 reminds Eritreans of the inevitability of victory in the ongoing nation building process in spite of hardships and conspiracies.

... The Absolute Measure of Eritrean Resilience

Continued from page 2

handing over the torch of national preservation.

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husbands before married life could truly begin. Children were orphaned, left to bear the psychological scars of war. The sacrifice was equally shared by urban underground networks, where many young revolutionaries perished in the notorious, concentration-camp-like prisons of Mariam Gimbi and Expo. Yet, by slaughtering tens of thousands of citizens indiscriminately, the occupation forces unwittingly strengthened the socio-political bond tying Eritreans of all ethnic groups together, accelerating their own demise. For every life taken, a martyr was created, inspiring thousands more to volunteer for the front.

The arrival of Independence in 1991, however, did not signal the permanent end of the tempest. The post-independence era quickly forced the Eritrean people to confront an entirely new matrix of sacrifices. Merely eight years after the euphoric celebrations of liberation, Eritrea's sovereignty was threatened once more when a large-scale war of aggression was launched under the pretext of a border dispute.

In that critical hour, a new generation—the Warsai—stepped forward. They drew upon the same endurance and determination that had defined their predecessors to defend the land they called home. In a rare display of defiance, national resolve, and military intelligence, the Warsai tore the invading army's strategies apart, confounding a geopolitical community that often reacts with dread when a small nation defies their distorted, predetermined assumptions. The Yikealo joined them, guiding them through the familiar horrors of the trenches and, in the process, seamlessly

The preservation of this hard-won sovereignty in the modern era required a profound transformation of the national struggle, moving from the theater of conventional warfare into an era of total, collective safeguarding of our independence. When the nation was forced to maintain constant vigilance to defend its borders against shifting geopolitical pressures, the Eritrean people were called upon to embrace a new kind of sacrifice—one in which peacetime comforts were voluntarily set aside for the higher purpose of national defense.

Even in the face of external economic pressures, political isolation, and unjust international sanctions designed to weaken the nation's resolve, the internal fabric of society did not fracture. Instead, this period of intense pressure fostered a sophisticated, resilient self-reliance, proving that the spirit of Sahel could not be broken by economic hardship or geopolitical hostility.

The post-independence journey has become an enduring demonstration of a people who understand that independence is not a single, static moment in time, but a continuous, daily defense of dignity and self-determination against a world that repeatedly underestimated us. It is this unwavering commitment to draw strength from within, to endure the prolonged storms of state-building with unyielding pride, and to protect the legacy of the fallen at all costs that cements the profound depth of the national ethos, forever echoing the ultimate truth:

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Glory to our Martyrs.