

The Ethiopian News Week in Review at Ezega.com

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The most viewed post of the week was the two-part story on Valentine's Day in Addis Ababa written by Eden Habtamu. Eden went around the city meeting and asking people if this western event is being observed by some in Addis Ababa. She went to Ghion Hotel and met couple being married who were not aware of the event but happy to see that they got married on a day love. She visited some shops in Addis that were selling postcards and other items briskly. She visited Jupiter Hotel in Addis that had Valentine's Day package that included Deluxe Room, romantic Gourmet dinner for two Jazz music, wine or champagne, strawberry with chocolate ice cream, twelve stems of roses, breakfast, the weekend edition of the New York Times, and late check out. Eden wrote "I can't tell you how romantic, peaceful, and tranquil the place is."

Eden Habtamu also visited Bellis Sima Restaurant and Café, owned by Miss Ethiopia 2003, Hayat Ahmed. She chronicled the atmosphere during the Valentine's Day event. She also interviewed the renowned Ethiopian artist, actor, and film director, Serwit Fikre, and his wife, Romi. Serawit said this is their first time celebrating Valentine's Day. "We used to hear about Valentine's Day in the media. Nevertheless, we didn't pay much attention to it. But, this year, I think we became more informed about the day. Our media (that he owns) works a lot on Valentine's Day. Our FM radio programs were especially inspiring." Questioned whether this will fit with our culture, Serawit said, "I don't think there is any problem with celebrating such days. We have even adopted a lot of unnecessary trends. After all, this is all about love, and it can even renew your love and your day. I don't see any harm with it."

Eden also interviewed Hayat Ahmed, the Miss Ethiopia 2003 winner and owner of Bellis Sima Restaurant. Hayat said she is not new to celebrating Valentine's Day. She started celebrating when she joined college. "That must have been around eight years ago. But, since I started this restaurant, I take it seriously and celebrate the day and welcome our customers, too." Commenting on Miss Ethiopia Pageant, she said, "The Miss Ethiopia title is a huge responsibility. Whoever shoulders this responsibility has a chance (and challenges) to change the image of the country. It's a big opportunity, but very challenging one as well. I am willing to assist Chuna Okok, or anyone else who holds the title, as much as I can. For Chuna, I wish her all the best and I will be very happy to share my experience with her."

The other leading story of the week was the story about PM Meles hinting that he may leave office in 2010. Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said on Friday he was in consultations with his ruling party about the possibility of quitting as Prime Minister and retaining his role as the party leader after next year's elections. The Ethiopian Premier, who has been at the helm of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) for the last 18 years, said on Friday that he has had enough and wanted to do something different after the next elections.

Ethiopia is about 15 months away from the next elections, due in 2010. The Prime Minister says he is considering quitting the post and remaining as party leader if his party members agree to the position, but said he would make a final decision on this later. "I do not think there is a conflict of policy here. My desire is that I have had enough here and I have to move on. I want to leave this position (Prime Minister) without leaving the party as leader but I have to respect the decisions of the party," Meles told journalists.

Another news post that received much attention was about a lottery draw that was held in Addis Ababa to transfer condominium houses from Addis Ababa City administration to private owners. The ceremony was conducted at the City Hall in Addis Ababa. With this draw, Addis Ababa Housing Development Project Office effectively transferred 15,039 condo units to the lottery winners, making more than 15,000 residents of Addis Ababa new home owners. During this event, the Deputy Mayor of Addis Ababa city and Head of Information and Culture Bureau, Ato kefyalew Azeze, and other high ranking officials were present.

Ato Kefyalew Azeze said “Our plan is to distribute 70,000 houses during this fiscal year. We are transferring 15,039 houses today to the lottery winners. We believe this will partially solve the housing problem we are currently experiencing in the city.” This is the fourth of such transfers the city administration has conducted so far. During the first three rounds, the city transferred ownership for 36,000 condominium houses.

At Ezega Jobs, many new jobs were posted. Vacancy ads that were viewed the most were “Data Entry Clerk” posted Ethiopian Commodity Exchange; “IT- Programmer” posted by African Satel Information Technology Service-Ethiopia; “Secretary I” posted by Construction & Business Bank S.C.; “MIS Officer” posted by Ethiopian Evangelical Church; and “Bank Clerk II” posted by Construction & Business Bank S.C.. For more information on these and other jobs in Ethiopia, please visit <http://www.Ezega.com/Jobs/index.aspx>.

At Ezega Real Estate, many new properties were also posted for sale and rent. The most viewed home ads include “4BR, 2Bath G+1 House for sale” in Bole, Addis Ababa, for 4,000,000 ETB; “300 m2 land for sale” in Gerji, Addis Ababa for 700,000 ETB; and “3BR, 2Bath House for sale” in Ayat, Addis Ababa, for 3,391,507 ETB; “5BR, 2Bath House for sale” in Piassa, Addis Ababa for 5,00,000 ETB; and “3BR Villa on 1000 m2 L-shaped land for sale” in Bole Riwanda, Addis Ababa for 4,000,000 ETB. For more information on these and other homes and properties for sale in Ethiopia, please visit <http://www.Ezega.com/RealEstate/Index.aspx>.

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