

NATIONAL FESTIVAL 2025 COLORFULLY CONCLUDES



The National Eritrean Festival 2025, which was officially opened by President Isaias Afwerki on 9 August at the Expo Compound, colorfully concluded on 17 August with an official ceremony.

The closing ceremony was attended by Ministers, senior Government and PFDJ officials, as well as numerous artists and festival participants from across the regions of the country.

Ambassador Zemede Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports, noted the effort required to accommodate more than 50,000 visitors daily and commended the strong participation of committees, partners, and the disciplined involvement of the public.

Ambassador Zemede also highlighted that the national festival serves as a forum where generations deepen their understanding, transfer noble societal values, and nurture competent and knowledgeable youth and children in one setting.

Mr. Solomon Dirar presented a report outlining the achievements registered and challenges encountered during the week-long event. He stated that the festival was visited by about half a million people from across the country.

The festival featured cultural and musical performances, traditional villages showcasing the cultures and traditions of the various ethnic groups, exhibitions of products by

institutions and regions, children's educational and entertainment programs, book displays, painting and sculpture exhibitions, seminars, literature and poetry competitions, as well as research presentations, among others.

The closing ceremony was highlighted by cultural and artistic performances, with awards presented to individuals and groups who contributed to and participated in the successful implementation of the national festival.

PERMANENT DESERT LOCUST INVASION MONITORING CENTER IN GADM-HALIB

A permanent desert locust invasion monitoring center has been established in Gadm-Halib administrative area through the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture's central office. The center is located about 60 km east of Afabet town.

Mr. Efrem Kiflu, head of Administration and Finance at the Ministry of Agriculture, said the construction of the center was carried out mainly by members of the Defense Forces, with participation from the Segen Construction Company, Adi-Hallo Project, and the Office of

the Chief of Staff of the Eritrean Defense Forces in designing and supervising the project.

Residents and administrators of Afabet sub-zone, particularly from the Gadm-Halib administrative area, said the establishment of the monitoring center would significantly ease the burden previously shouldered by locals in monitoring and controlling desert locust infestations.

Members of the Defense Forces who took part in the project expressed satisfaction with their contribution and the timely completion of the center.



SEMINAR FOCUSING ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

The Commission of Culture and Sports organized a seminar on cultural heritage and identity for over 150 members of traditional dance and music groups from the Southern Region on 18 August in Asmara.

At the seminar, Dr. Tsegay Medin, head of Archaeological Heritage Research at the Commission, gave a detailed briefing on the meaning and significance of culture, the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage, and the role of heritage in consolidating national identity.

Highlighting the importance of cultural heritage in preserving identity, understanding the current situation, and envisioning the future, Dr. Tsegay said that archaeological findings from the prehistoric and historic eras, including the period of kingdoms and colonialism, have made a significant contribution to nurturing national identity.

Dr. Tsegay further stated that the Commission of Culture and Sports is making strong efforts in research, conservation, and transmission of cultural heritage. He noted, however, that ongoing damage and destruction of heritage sites remain the main challenges.

The participants held extensive discussions on the issues raised during the seminar and adopted several recommendations. These included intensifying efforts to repatriate heritage items held abroad and addressing the damage caused to ancient buildings under the pretext of renovation.

Lt. Col. Samuel Tsegay, head of Administration and Finance at the Commission of Culture and Sports, and Mr. Abraham Yohannes, Director General of Culture and Sports in the Southern Region, emphasized the significance of the seminar and called for its continuation.

TRAINING ON MATERIAL MANAGEMENT AND PROCUREMENT

The Ministry of Agriculture organized training for 62 of its members on material management, procurement, and transit management. The training was conducted at the Ministry's Regulatory Service Office in Villaggio.

The participants included members of the Ministry from the six regions of the country, the central office, administration and finance, the National Agricultural Research Centers, regulatory services, and the National Animal Health Laboratory.

The trainees stated that the training would make a significant contribution to facilitating their daily activities. They commended

the organizers and the trainers for their efforts.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the program on 15 August, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, noted that procurement and material management are among the Ministry's most essential activities. He called on the trainees to practically apply the knowledge they gained in their workplaces.

Minister Arefaine also stressed that similar training programs aimed at developing the capacity of staff members will continue in earnest.

In the same vein, four months of training on poultry farming were provided to foster families in the

Dubarwa sub-zone.

Explaining that the objective of the training program was to improve the economic status of foster families, Ms. Tirhas Adresom, head of the National Union of Eritrean Women in the sub-zone, called on all concerned institutions to provide support to the families in their endeavors.

Mr. Abraham Yosief, representative of the administrator of the sub-zone, commended the initiative taken by the National Union of Eritrean Women and expressed the readiness of the sub-zonal administration to stand alongside the trainees in all their future activities.



REPORTAGE

Eritrean Festival 2025: A Week of Unity, Culture, and Resilience

Mussie Efriem

The Eritrean National Festival, a vibrant and essential platform for nation-building, concluded its nine-day run on Sunday, August 17. The event drew an estimated half-million attendees from all parts of the country and the diaspora, transforming the Expo Grounds in Asmara into a living microcosm of the nation.

More than a simple cultural showcase, the festival serves as a crucial stage for cultivating a shared national identity among Eritrea's nine distinct ethnic groups. It provides a vital connection to heritage for the younger generation and the diaspora, offering an immersive experience through traditional music, dance, authentic cuisine, and unique artistic exhibits.

The Eritrean National Festival highlights the unique contributions of the country's six regions, with each displaying its distinct culture, products, and natural resources. The event also fosters a dynamic environment for cultural and commercial exchange by providing a platform for Eritrean authors and various companies to introduce and



sell their work. Additionally, the festival showcased locally produced films, underscoring its significant role in promoting national pride and cultural expression.

A key aspect of the festival is the instrumental role played by the six regions in creating the festive atmosphere. Each of Eritrea's nine ethnic groups is represented, with their cultural houses on display, offering a vivid look into their lifestyles and traditions. The lively atmosphere is further enhanced by cultural dancing throughout the expo grounds. Beyond the zonal exhibits, the festival also gives a platform to many Eritrean poets, allowing them to express their artistic works and connect with the audience. For younger attendees, the expo grounds feature a dedicated children's section with various activities, ensuring a fun and engaging

experience for the whole family. And among the unique attractions of the festival is the historic steam locomotive, which serves as a significant draw for tourism. This makes Eritrea a prime destination for steam locomotive enthusiasts from around the world. Unlike in many other countries where these old trains are either no longer in existence or are confined to museums, the Eritrean festival allows these magnificent pieces of history to be seen and appreciated in a lively, active setting.

The Eritrean National Festival is a dynamic and comprehensive celebration of the nation's culture and talent. It serves as a vital stage for showcasing the creative skills of young Eritreans, with diverse artistic expressions on full display. The festival highlights the unique cultures of the country's six regions, each presenting its distinct products,

natural resources, and traditions. This year's event also featured a special focus on the arts with a wide array of exhibits. These included handicrafts and sculptures created by women, alongside performances and competitions in various disciplines such as musical instruments, poetry, short stories, and oral traditions. The festival transforms the Expo Grounds in Asmara into a microcosm of the nation, celebrating the rich diversity of Eritrean identity within a unified national framework.

The closing ceremony of this year's National Festival took place at the G-3 Hall on the Expo Grounds. It was attended by high-ranking government and PFDJ officials, zonal representatives,

was followed by a Kunama song performed by the Gash-Barka region's cultural troupe, which reflects marriage and childbirth traditions of the Kunama ethnic group.

Following the cultural performance, Ambassador Zemed Tekle, the Chairman of the National Holidays Organizing Committee and Commissioner of Culture and Sports, took the stage to open the ceremony with a welcoming speech officially. He noted the effort required to accommodate more than 50,000 visitors daily. He expressed his gratitude to the various festival committees and sub-committees for their hard work and dedication, which ensured the smooth and successful running of the event. He also thanked the public for



as well as numerous artists and festival participants from across the country. The ceremony began at 5 PM with a moment of silence to honor Eritrea's martyrs. This

the cooperation and disciplined conduct, which he credited as a key factor in the festival's overall success. Over its nine-day run, the festival hosted an estimated half-million visitors.

Following Ambassador Zemed Tekle's address, the celebration continued with captivating artistic performances by cultural troupes from across the country, each showcasing the unique traditions of Eritrea's nine ethnic groups. Veteran artist Solomon Drar presented a detailed report on the festival, underscoring its role as a platform to highlight Eritrea's cultural diversity, rich history, and ongoing national development. Ambassador Zemed also presented certificates of recognition and symbolic gifts to the directors of the Zonal Culture and Sports divisions. The 2025 Eritrean National Festival concluded at 7 p.m. with the national anthem, formally bringing the nine-day celebration to a close.



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SpotLight

Understanding Eritrea's Distinctive Development Vision

Bana Negusse

Eritrea's development story is too often told through the narrow lens of global benchmarks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), or the African Union's Agenda 2063. While these frameworks provide valuable points of comparison, they risk overlooking or misrepresenting the country's own long-standing and distinctive approach to progress. Far from being a late or reluctant adopter of global priorities, Eritrea has, since well before independence in 1991, embedded the core principles of sustainable development – social justice, equality, human dignity, environmental stewardship, and shared prosperity – into its national vision and policy architecture. Yet these commitments are frequently misunderstood.

Eritrea's insistence on self-reliance, for instance, is often mislabelled as "isolationism," while the deeply rooted social values of solidarity and collective responsibility are rarely acknowledged in mainstream development discourse. A closer look, however, reveals that Eritrea's path not only aligns with many global goals but also reflects a broader, indigenous vision of sustainable development – one that is at once pragmatic, principled, and deeply connected to the country's history and culture.

This vision has deep roots in Eritrea's modern history. Consider the decades-long armed liberation struggle: while its immediate objective was national independence, it was also waged in pursuit of social justice, gender equality, poverty eradication, human rights, and shared prosperity – all of which today are recognized as cornerstones of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. These aspirations did not emerge in reaction to external agendas but were part of the nation's identity from the outset.

Eritrea's commitment to sustainable development has also been clearly articulated in official documents and declarations. A central example is the National Charter, adopted in February 1994 in the historic town of Nakfa, which continues to serve as a guiding vision for the country. It outlines Eritrea's aspirations to build a prosperous, unified, and just nation,



where citizens can fulfil their potential in a peaceful, healthy, and sustainable environment. Strikingly, the objectives of the Charter align closely with the SDGs and Agenda 2063 and, in many respects, anticipated them by decades.

Importantly, these aspirations have not remained abstract. Eritrea has consistently sought to translate them into tangible outcomes, particularly through its commitment to social justice and equity. The country has worked to ensure that historically vulnerable and marginalized groups are given equal opportunities to thrive. This principle is reflected in the provision of free healthcare and education at all levels, alongside a range of social protection measures designed to safeguard the most disadvantaged.

Notably, Eritrea has pursued these policies despite its status as a low-income, developing country – a reality that makes such universal commitments both ambitious and exceptional. In doing so, Eritrea distinguishes itself not only from many other developing nations, where similar services are often inaccessible, but even from some wealthier states that fall short of guaranteeing such rights to all their citizens. This reflects a deliberate choice to prioritize inclusivity, fairness, and human dignity as central pillars of national development, even in the face of scarce resources.

One of the most frequently

misunderstood aspects of Eritrea's development model is its principle of self-reliance and approach to foreign assistance. While some critics label this stance "isolationist," such characterizations miss the mark. Eritrea does not reject

community increasingly scales back development assistance and funding across the globe, Eritrea's approach appears not only principled but also prescient. Many developing countries that became heavily dependent on aid now face



international partnerships; it insists that they be genuine, equitable, and complementary to national priorities. Aid is welcomed when it addresses specific, locally identified needs and strengthens national institutions, but rejected when it comes with suffocating conditionalities or risks fostering dependency. This approach has sometimes put Eritrea at odds with donors accustomed to wielding disproportionate control over aid flows and development strategies. Yet far from signalling withdrawal from the international community, Eritrea's policy reflects a determination to safeguard sovereignty, preserve agency, and ensure that citizens themselves remain the primary authors of the nation's development.

Today, as the international

acute challenges as external support diminishes, often with devastating consequences for essential services and long-term development goals. By contrast, Eritrea's insistence on building capacity from within, minimizing reliance on external actors, and prioritizing self-reliance has meant that it is comparatively less vulnerable to such global shifts. Rather than scrambling to fill sudden gaps, Eritrea has continued to pursue development on the basis of internal resources, resilient institutions, and strong social solidarity – demonstrating the wisdom and durability of its chosen path.

Complementing this resilience is Eritrea's strong foundation of solidarity, generosity, mutual support, and community – pillars that are often overlooked in

external analyses but remain central to the country's social fabric. These values are reinforced by both faith and tradition. Christianity emphasizes giving, while Islam enshrines Zakat (almsgiving) as one of its five pillars. Likewise, the country's diverse ethnolinguistic groups place high social value on collective responsibility. From an early age, Eritreans are taught that while communities are made up of individuals, the survival and flourishing of individuals depend on the strength of the collective. Reflecting this, across rural villages and urban neighbourhoods, people routinely come together to till the fields, plant crops, build homes, and develop community projects. During the COVID-19 pandemic years ago, this spirit of solidarity proved vital in mobilizing resources, sharing burdens, and mitigating hardships nationwide.

Underlying these traditions is also a profound sense of duty and obligation. Supporting the less fortunate is widely seen not just as kindness but as a moral responsibility. Nowhere is this clearer than in the enduring support extended to war veterans, the families of martyrs, and contributions from the Eritrean diaspora. The immense sacrifices made for independence and sovereignty have instilled in society a collective duty to honour those who gave their lives or livelihoods, and to preserve their legacy through continuous acts of generosity and solidarity.

In sum, Eritrea's development story is one that has been too often misunderstood, reduced to external frameworks or mischaracterized through superficial labels. While the country's policies and practices overlap significantly with the SDGs and Agenda 2063, they also reflect a deeper, historically grounded vision rooted in independence, self-reliance, solidarity, and community responsibility. Far from being isolationist or reactive, Eritrea's approach demonstrates a commitment to sustainable development that is indigenous, resilient, and profoundly connected to the lived experiences of its people. Recognizing this reality is essential to appreciating the country's unique development trajectory and its broader contribution to the global discourse on sustainable and inclusive progress.

OPINION

Eritrea's "Remontada" to the United Nations: Rectification of the Historical Injustice and Reclamation of the Narrative

Semere Azazi

On the 31st of July 2025, a book launch ceremony was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The book, entitled "An African People's Quest for Freedom and Justice," is written by Tegadalay Alemseged Tesfai, a veteran freedom fighter and renowned Eritrean historian. Members of the diplomatic corps including Permanent Representatives and senior diplomats, United Nations officials, friends of Eritrea and members of the Eritrean community from and around New York City, including family members of the author attended the event. Unlike the usual thematic side-events hosted in room-12 of the UN hall, it was a rare event organized by the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the UN to celebrate a political history book of Eritrea that meticulously chronicles through the period of 1941-1962 – a defining epoch that determined the future and fate of Eritreans against their will for self-determination and independence at the same platform - the United Nations.

A reviewer introduced alemseged's seminal work, Mr. Abiyu Berele –an Ethiopian author, who had shared his reflection on the book's fundamental themes – the British Military Administration in Eritrea, the role of the post-war victors' powers and the sham federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia. Mr. Abiyu, a former member of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), added his personal anecdote that at his adult age he had joined the Eritrean cause for liberation inspired by the then broader scope of struggle for decolonization and freedom.

Ambassador Sophia Tesfamariam, Eritrea's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, graciously presented Mr. Alemseged Tesfai to the audience as "a lawyer by profession, freedom fighter by choice, and a prolific author." Recounting his previous works, she added: "...Alemseged has penned a variety of influential publications in both English and Tigrigna including: Two weeks in the Trenches, the acclaimed play – "The Other War" and several historical novels and anthologies such as "Wedi Hadera: Kab Badme nab Sahel" (The Son of Hadera: From Badme to Sahel), "Luul", "Libi Tegadalai" (The Heart of a Freedom Fighter), "Gitano" (based on the American movie The Brave

In football matches, as in all competitive sports, there is no final result until the last whistle. Teams fight – attack, counter-attack, high-press, defend, switch players and tactics - to make the best out of their opponents and win matches. We have often witnessed that results are overturned even in the last pulses - deficits have been undone and victories are reclaimed. Although it is contested, the greatest comeback of all time in football history, Barcelona's 6-1 victory over Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) in 2017, is regarded as the most iconic. Having lost the first leg of the European Champions League 4-0 at the Parc des Princes, Barcelona reversed the result to a notable 6-5 aggregate victory at the Camp Nou. This famous response is referred to as "La Remontada" – the Spanish equivalent of "The Comeback."

One), "Selete a'Eruruk: TmTm ab Gejeret" (The Three Friends: Wrestling in Gejeret) and the "Ayfleale" trilogy: "Aynfelale: 1941-1950," "Federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia: From Matienzo to Tedla (1951-1955)," and "Eritrea from Federation to Annexation" and Armed Struggle (1956-1962." He has also co-edited "Post-Conflict Eritrea: Prospects for Reconstruction and Development," a critical resource addressing the nation's post-war challenges for development."

Mr. Alemseged, a natural storyteller, first divulged how he got into the oceanic field of history – a mission he claims was not his primary calling. Indeed, it was through his master's thesis examining the 'legal basis for the handling of the Eritrean case by the post-World War II victors and the UN General Assembly' and his dismay with the lack of an Eritrean version of the story that compelled him to delve deeper into the colonial history of Eritrea. In hindsight, that was a distinct calling that would not only nurture Alemseged as an iconic historian but also profoundly shape the trajectory of nation-building and national identity. I bet he would never regret it for a second.

While reserving Alemseged's masterpiece for the readers to appreciate, this brief reflection attempts to shed light on few aspects of his enchanting presentation during the book launch. Mr. Alemseged expounded at length how the defeat of the Italians and the subsequent British Military Administration (BMA) and geopolitical interests of major powers had a detrimental impact on the right of self-determination of the Eritrean people. For the British, who had soon betrayed Eritreans in the aftermath of the war, he said, 'Eritrea was not a viable polity that could sustain as an independent nation.' Therefore, by the end of the War (WWII), the partition plan was their official policy– the highland 'Christian dominated' to be ceded to Ethiopia and the 'Muslim inhabited' lowland to Sudan. While advancing the partition scheme, the BMA overtly sided with the

Italians who maintained the fascist administrative and legal systems and had controlled key political and economic sectors. This had raged the natives. Meanwhile, Alemseged reminded, as the partition plan publicized, Eritreans in either political bloc – independence and unionists – got alarmed and were equally averse to the scheme.

Fast-forward, Alemseged continued unpacking the political and diplomatic collusion involving the Eritrean case before the United Nations that culminated in the sham federal arrangement with Ethiopia. For the law-trained turned-historian, the US-proposed federation formula as it was incomprehensible during his legal studies, so does it remain a historical anomaly 75 years later after its adoption. Unfortunately, that was not a concern for its authors. After the so-called 'Bevin-Sforza partition plan' was rejected by the Political Committee of UN General Assembly (UNGA), the US had floated a vaguely conceptualized 'federation formula.' The proposal defied the fundamental premises of a constitutional federal arrangement between two states should entail as contested by several delegations, particularly the Burmese. The latter and other member states argued that a federal arrangement is only possible for two equally empowered states. However, against this legal imperative, and more fundamentally in the absence of the Eritrean people, the UN had decided to federate Eritrea under the 'sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown' in a remote platform across the Atlantic Ocean. Such travesty of justice had a colossal repercussion not only to the right of self-determination of Eritreans, but also to the entire region as cautioned by one of Eritrea's eminent freedom fighters - Patriot Ibrahim Sultan.

Mr. Alemseged paused his captivating narration and requested the audience to pay attention to a young girl – Ariana (the youngest from his attending family members), who asked her to read a passage from the book on page 160. In an emblematic fashion, he said "let me now pass on the torch to the young generation." The passage of

the book was extracted from the historic speech of patriot Ibrahim Sultan who addressed the Political Committee of the UNGA on the morning of 27 November 1950 before the federation resolution (390A(v)) was adopted in the afternoon. Ironically, Mr. Ibrahim was invited to the Committee long after the substantive discussions on the federation proposal had been concluded within the Ad Hoc Committee and passed on to the Political Committee for adoption – a fait accompli. The bright Ariana read as follows:

"...Our country is the neighbor of a large country which wants to annex us to it, in spite of the wishes of our people. We have an Administration [the British] governing our country which wants to divide our country and to annex part of it at least to Ethiopia. Both parties object to our idea of independence. This is how this group mushroomed and it is in fact a minority.

I ask the members of the Committee, why is European colonialism being fought and opposed? Is it in order to replace it by an African form of colonialism?...Ethiopia asked for Somaliland to be annexed to it...[and] we are glad to see that Somaliland has had its right to independence recognized. Why, therefore, we are being deprived of this natural right that has been given to Libya and Somaliland?

The members of the Committee are responsible for what may take place in this part of East Africa in the way of skirmishes and uprisings in case a mistaken decision is made which will force us to resist in order to earn and maintain our independence and preserve our being. Up to now, we have suffered difficulties and tolerated hardships only to maintain peace and order in our country and in the hope that we shall get from this Committee justice and an unbiased attitude towards our natural rights."

Patriot Ibrahim's impassioned speech was more than an appeal to the world body. Indeed, it was a farsighted warning that Eritreans

shall never remain unheeded until their natural rights to freedom, self-determination and independence are attained. After four decades of costly sacrifices, through blood and ballots, Eritreans eventually rectified the historical injustice and Eritrea reclaimed its deserved seat at the United Nations as an independent and equally sovereign nation to all states – The historic Remontada!

Almost eight decades later, the launch of the monumental book of Tegadalay Alemseged at the United Nations was more than a ceremony – it is a reclamation and reassertion of Eritrea's own narrative – La Remontada! Ambassador Sophia had superbly captured the event in her introductory remarks: "launching this noble work at the UN is no accident. This is the very platform where Eritrea's voice was once dismissed. To return here, with our story in our own words, is an act of quiet justice, a reminder that truth endures, and suppressed narratives will always find their way back."

To sum up, unlike in football matches, the rules of global politics are often rigged in favor of the interests of the powerful and their allies. The injustices perpetrated against Eritrea and its people in the past eight decades are the subject of glaring historical records. For Eritrea and Eritreans, distant or recent history is not just a collective memory, but a source of continued defiance and resilience against injustices and a driving force for building a prosperous and viable nation.

Finally, in a disclaimer note, the football metaphor used in the piece is never intended to establish any equivalence with, or underestimate, the precious sacrifices that Eritreans have paid and continue to pay. It is rather for mere presentation convenience.

For Tegadalay Alemseged Tesfai, once again congratulations for the masterpiece and thank you for Eritrea's Remontada to the United Nations with the authentic narrative of its own history. May God bestow you with more health and blessing.

By Kesete Gebrehiwet

Every August, the Expo Grounds in Asmara transform into a living museum of Eritrean identity. The National Festival is more than a week of celebration; it is a stage where culture, memory, and creativity converge. From August 9 to 17, 2025, Eritreans from all walks of life gathered to celebrate their unity in diversity through music, dance, crafts, exhibitions, and storytelling. Among the many regional showcases, the Southern Region's cultural exhibition stood out for its blend of rigorous research, authentic performance, and community-driven creativity.

The story behind these presentations is as compelling as the shows themselves. Behind every song, artifact, costume, and dance lies a year of preparation: months of research in villages, countless rehearsals, and the dedication of performers who pour their hearts into keeping traditions alive. The Southern Region's showcase at the 2025 Festival was not only an exhibition of heritage but also a testament to the enduring pride and resilience of the Eritrean people.

The Southern Region's contribution to the festival is the result of a year-round commitment. Preparations begin long before the Expo. According to Mr. Girmay Gebru, Director of the Holidays Coordinating Committee in the Southern Region, activities extend to multiple community events, including pilgrimages to Abune Anbes, Daba-Ezray, and other cultural gatherings. These occasions serve as vital training grounds, strengthening both skill and cultural knowledge.

The most intensive preparations begin a month before the festival, when performers—about 180 this year—rehearse day and night. Experienced judges provide training and mentorship, shaping the quality of performances and selecting the best groups to represent the region. The result is a polished yet authentic showcase, where artistry and tradition walk hand in hand.

The Southern Region's performances in 2025 highlighted the traditions of the Tigrinya and Saho ethnic groups, featuring traditional dances, instruments, customs, and practices related to livelihoods and social institutions.

Eritrea Festival: Echoes of Living Heritage and Pride



Organizers emphasized that authenticity is non-negotiable. Preparations start in the villages where traditions originate, with elders and cultural custodians sharing invaluable knowledge. Research spanned across localities including Mai-Mne, Adi-Quala, Dubarwa, Senafe, Tseorona, Segeneyti, and Adi-Keyih, ensuring that the performances were rooted in genuine community practices rather than stylized approximations.

Performers who excelled in Youth Week and Awra Award competitions were selected for further training. According to Mr. Amanuel Goitom, a renowned musician, authenticity also meant using traditional instruments and song styles to narrate stories of history, romance, and bravery.

Costuming was equally vital. Classic cotton dresses, chiffon garments, marriage costumes, and hzab were complemented by traditional ornaments and hairstyles. Organizers pointed out that a 2019 congress had already established guidelines for ensuring authenticity in costumes, and the outfits presented at Expo

2025 reflected careful adherence to these standards.

Echoes of Bravery and Oral Tradition

One of the showcase's most powerful dimensions was its focus on histories of bravery. Oral traditions and community records were transformed into performances honoring heroes such as Degyat Meharay, Degyat Bahta Hagos, and Ali Osmar Buri, the patriot who famously broke out of Nakura Prison. Stories from the 1890s through the Independence struggle were performed in both Saho and Tigrinya, anchoring present-day audiences to the resilience of their ancestors.

Songs composed during moments of historic significance—such as Independence Day—were also included. As Mr. Girmay noted, these performances not only entertain but also educate, ensuring that lesser-known stories from villages are brought to national attention. For young audiences, they serve as cultural textbooks written in rhythm and dance.

Beyond performances, the Southern Region showcased an impressive collection of artifacts, each infused with cultural meaning. Mr. Tadesse Ghebretsaie, coordinator of the livelihood section, explained the making of leather crop sacks ranging from 40 to 120 kilograms in capacity, using tanning processes that involve animal urine and milk to ensure durability.

Other items included bridal baggage, leather curtains, pottery, and wooden utensils. Particularly evocative were wooden pillows used by the Saho community—soft ones for peacetime, harder versions for wartime—symbolizing the resilience of generations past.

Traditional conflict-resolution systems were also highlighted. The Deqi-Rqab customary laws of the Tigrinya and the Gabse system of the Saho underscored Eritrea's indigenous methods of sustaining harmony.

Women as Custodians of Tradition

Continued on page 6



Mr. Girmay Gebru



Mr. Amanuel Goitom



Ms. Kibra Hayelom



Ms. Seada Haji Ibrahim



Mr. Tadesse Ghebretsaie





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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Bisha Mining Share Company is inviting applicants for the following position for Bisha site project.

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Task description expanded to core performance areas

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- Implementation of the plan
- Reporting

Unique requirements / other information

- Ability to operate all underground equipment
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- 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.
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2. Mineral Resources Management
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Note to Eritrean applicants:
Please send a copy of your application to:
1. Aliens Employment permits Affairs,
P. O. Box 7940
Asmara, Eritrea.

Notice

Notice is hereby given to the public that Gelila PLC convened an extraordinary general meeting on August 1, 2025 at 10:00 AM and resolved the following.

1. Mrs. Mebrat Ghebremeskel Ghebrehiwet sold her 50 shares, with the par value of 3,000 Nakfa each, to Mr. Berhane Tekeste Weldeab and Mrs. Mebrat withdrew from the Company.
2. Mr. Berhane Tekeste is admitted as a new member the Company.
3. Mrs. Helen Habtemichael Ghebregziabiher is the General Manager of the Company.

Gelila PLC

Eritrea Festival . . .

Continued from page 5

Several women participants spoke of their roles in preserving oral traditions and customs.

• Ms. Seada Haji Adem, from Adi-Keyih sub-zone, has participated since 2003, presenting oral traditions of the Saho community. She showcased items used during honeymoon celebrations, such as the Sibole bridal luggage, Barkuma groom’s pillow, and Megenah-Teare bridal mirror.

• Ms. Saliha Ibrahim, from Hazemo sub-zone, described the Surara attire worn during adolescence and specific accessories like Shader and Ktkud worn by married women. Hairstyles such as Debokat, Faruda, and Tuket marked marital status, while exceptional curtains made of goat or sheep skins were part of honeymoon customs.

• Ms. Kibra Hayelom, from Areza sub-zone, highlighted traditional bridal coyness, noting how brides rarely interacted with in-laws and were often escorted by mules.

Until recently, many of these artifacts were borrowed from individuals in villages. Now, the regional administration purchases and preserves them, ensuring they remain part of the cultural treasury while being accessible for future festivals.

Renewal and Fresh Content

Organizers stressed that every year’s showcase must introduce new content while preserving authenticity. This year’s exhibition featured underrepresented customs and histories, preventing the festival from becoming repetitive.

The performers’ dedication—180 participants working tirelessly for weeks—ensured that the displays felt both fresh and deeply rooted. As one organizer explained, “Each year we do our best to bring new content that has never been presented before.”

While each region highlighted its distinct heritage, the Southern Region’s exhibition underscored the broader theme of unity in diversity. The Expo Grounds became a space where Eritreans gathered not only to compete but also to celebrate togetherness.

As Mr. Girmay noted, “Sawa and the Expo are the best platforms where Eritrea’s unity in diversity is celebrated. These events bring Eritreans together from across the country, creating an atmosphere of eagerness and competition that makes the festival unique year after year.”

The Southern Region’s contribution to the 2025 Festival was more than a cultural display; it was a living affirmation of heritage. Through meticulous research, year-long preparation, and authentic presentation, organizers transformed the Expo into a stage where history, identity, and creativity intersected.

From tales of gallant patriots to artifacts of daily life, from bridal attire to celebratory dances, the showcase reminded audiences that Eritrea’s culture is not a relic of the past but a living, evolving force.

In a rapidly changing world, festivals like this ensure that traditions remain visible, valued, and vibrant. For the Southern Region, the 2025 National Festival was not simply about looking back—it was about carrying heritage forward, inspiring pride and unity for generations to come.



Zara Mining
Share Company

Vacancy Announcement

Position:	Ass. Mining Training Officer
Department	UG Mining
Number required	01
Location:	Based at Koka Gold Mine (Site)
Reporting to:	UG Training Officer
Primary Responsibility & Scope of Work	Coordinate & assist underground training officer with accurate record keeping of the training progress of the workforce. He will create & maintain a filling system for every underground worker, tracking their training progress.
Duties:	- Maintain Training records & filling system for UG workforce. - Facilitate the UG induction process. - Assist in the creation & delivery of training programs for employees. - Schedule & coordinate training sessions & events. - Maintain training databases. - Communicate with trainers & trainees to ensure a successful training experience. - Set up & maintain training materials & equipment. - Monitor & evaluate training effectiveness. - Provide support in the development of training materials & presentations. - Work with management to identify training needs for individual employees & departments. - Perform needs analysis, compile training material, conduct interventions, & evaluate learners’ performance.
Formal Education, Certifications or Equivalents	- A high school diploma is required. - Training, Admin, or HR related fields.
Working Experience – Nature & Length	• Minimum 5 years of experience in the mining industry. • Computer literate with experience in Microsoft office programs. • Ability to maintain accurate training records. • Excellent verbal & written communication. • Ability to conduct thorough needs assessment to gauge training needs. • Strong desktop & in person research, presentation, & reporting skills. • A willingness to learn & a strong work ethic. • Excellent filling system skills.
Leadership experience- Nature & length	Experience in Admin & related fields.
Other skills and abilities	Physically fit & healthy. Strong communication & interpersonal skill. Team player. Must be able to work & perform under pressure. Knowle of relevant legislation. Good verbal & written communication skill in English. Produce & maintain effective training results.

Salary: according to the Company’s salary scale.

Additional Requirement for nationals: Having fulfilled their National Service obligations and provide evidence of a release paper from the Ministry of Defence. Provide clearance from the current/last employer. Applications should be sent through the Post Office.
Only short-listed applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview. The application will not be sent to the sender.

Address: Please mail your applications to Zara Mining Share Company. P. O. Box 2393. Asmara, Eritrea.

Note to Eritrean applicants: - Please send a copy of your application to Aliens Employment Permit Affairs P.O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea. and Eritrea. Mineral Resources Management P. O. Box 272

Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of announcement.



Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim: A Life Devoted to Books and Heritage

Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim, aka Subakum, was born in 1976 in Mai-Gundi, Tsorona Subzone, Southern region, and went to school in Asmara before moving to Ethiopia, where he worked as a teacher for several years. He later enrolled at the training center of the Electric Corporation for a two-year program, which led to a job at the corporation. Upon returning to Eritrea, he engaged in various professions before ultimately dedicating his life to collecting and selling books. He proudly displayed his vast collection at Expo for Festival Eritrea 2025.

Luwam Kahsay.H

Let's begin with how your passion for collecting books started.

My love for reading began in childhood. At school, we had lessons in the morning and afternoon, and that's when I started falling in love with books. My father was a bookworm—he owned many books and taught me languages and religious studies. That early exposure sparked the interest in languages, especially Arabic, and in books. I began collecting the books I read and borrowed others from friends.

How many books have you collected so far, and in which languages?

I estimate my collection exceeds 30,000 books. The books are written in a wide range of languages including Tigrigna, Arabic, Tigre, Saho, Bidawyet, Kunama, Amharic, Italian, English, French, German, and Dutch.

Do you collect other materials besides books?

Yes, I do. Alongside books, I collect newspapers, magazines, stamps, and black-and-white photographs of ethnic groups and regions of Eritrea. I also collect audio materials, especially cassettes. Finding adequate space is a challenge, but still I've managed to preserve a significant amount.

Where do you get your books and other items from?

From many generous individuals. Close friends have shared items they've preserved, and I buy used books from the market. Some donate books to support my passion. I'm deeply grateful to all of them.

What do you gain from collecting books, and who benefits from your collection?

It brings me joy and fulfillment. I've invested a lot -- financially and emotionally. Through reading, I've gained knowledge of world history and, most importantly, Eritrean



history. Beneficiaries include college students, researchers, writers, journalists, historians, genealogists, and even members of the Research and Documentation Center who consult my collection for linguistic studies. I lend books to trusted individuals and try to help anyone in need.

You have a large collection of books. How do you organize it?

Due to the limited space I have, my books aren't perfectly organized. Some are on shelves, others in trunks. Well, I classify the books by language and subject. If someone asks for a book by a specific author, I can often also provide other works by the same author or from the same publication period. For example, I've cataloged 629 books in Tigrigna that were published between 1866 and 1999; 105 of the books are fiction. This helps me locate and provide books

efficiently.

Do you keep records of your books by title and author?

Not for all, but I've created language-based records for many of them. It's work in progress, but it helps me track and retrieve books quite easily.

Can you tell us about some of the oldest and rarest books in your collection?

There are many, but a few stand out. "The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea" is one. It is the first Greek account of Eritrea's history, in general, and the ancient port of Adulis and Qohaito, in particular. It was translated into English in 1912 and Arabic in 1980 by a Kuwaiti scholar. Another treasure is a 1520 book by the Portuguese missionary, Father Francesco, giving detailed information on Eritrea from

Massawa to Debre Bizen. It was translated into Tigrigna in the 1980s by Haile Bokre under the title "ኤርትራ ኣብ ዘመነ ባሕሪ ነገራት", Eritea ab zemene bahri negestat. I also have customary laws believed to have been written in the 12th and 13th centuries, and a 16-page diary by Ghebreghirghis Senkohotay that was written in 1866. Ghebreghirghis's second book, published in 1889, is a 44-page translation of Arabic heroism. My collection also includes spiritual texts that are over 150 years old, religious parchments in Ge'ez and Arabic, and a 1914 book on the genealogy and customs of Hazega and Tseazega. I own "ኣደ ዛንታ," Hade zanta, which is believed to be the first fiction in Tigrigna, written by Father Gebreyesus Haylu in 1942, as well as medical texts, bilingual dictionaries, and other rare works that are over 100 years old.

Do you write? And how many languages do you speak?

Yes, I'm an avid reader and writer. I never miss a day without reading the four national newspapers and then dive into other books. During my time in Ethiopia under the Derg regime, I used to write articles in Arabic in the weekly newspaper "Al'alem." When I came back to Eritrea, I began writing in Arabic for various publications. With support from the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students, I had a

column in their newspaper "Tirigta" (Heartbeat) on history, tradition, and social issues. I've also contributed to "Eritrea al Hadisa", especially during the 10th Independence Day celebrations, and translated fiction into Tigrigna for "Hadas Ertra." My works have appeared in magazines such as "Agizo," "Hzbn Polisn," and "Tehadso."

I'm fluent in Saho, Tigrigna, Amharic, English, Afar, and have some knowledge of Tigre.

What do you think about the state of the culture of collecting in Eritrea?

There are valuable collections at the Research and Documentation Center, libraries, and private homes. However, many books are poorly preserved. My advice is to keep books properly or donate them to those who can. This is how we safeguard our history for future generations. Even if someone doesn't have the means to preserve books, they should consider passing them on to institutions or individuals who can. It's heartbreaking to see valuable materials deteriorate due to neglect.

What's your plan regarding your collection?

Despite space limitations, I plan to expand my collection. I want to make it more accessible not just for researchers and students, but for anyone interested in Eritrean heritage. I hope to eventually establish a permanent exhibition space or archive where people can explore the materials freely.

Let's conclude our interview with your final thoughts.

Books are history. They connect us to the past, present, and future. A person unaware of their past cannot understand their present or envision their future. Let's keep our history alive—by collecting and preserving our books. It's not just about ownership; it's about responsibility. Every book carries a story, and every story deserves to be remembered.

Thank you for your time, Mohamed.

