

## ERITREAN DELEGATION PARTICIPATES AT 31<sup>ST</sup> AU ORDINARY SESSION

Eritrean delegation led by Mr. Araia Desta, Eritrea's Permanent Representative to the African Union and Economic Commission of Africa, participated at the 31st AU ordinary session of African leaders held in Nouakchott, Mauritania.

The summit was held under the theme "Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation" and was chaired by Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda and current AU Chairman. The session discussed measures that each member country should take to develop legal and institutional capacity in order to eradicate corruption that is crippling Africa.

The meeting assessed the progress of the implementation

of the AU institutional transformation and adopted recommendations for strengthening peace and security in Africa. The meeting also elected members of the four AU organs and adopted budget for 2019.

The session also hailed the initiative taken by Eritrea and Ethiopia to legally and peacefully solve the conflict that existed between the two countries.

The African Union has



been blamed for not assuming responsibility for the implementation of the Algiers agreement that it was witness to. Meanwhile, the session approved and expressed support on the inquiry Eritrea submitted to the members of the Human Rights Council of the UN.

Upon staying for the summit, the Eritrean delegation also held discussion with representatives of various countries on issues of mutual interest.

## WORKSHOP ON EMPOWERING WOMEN

The National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) organized a workshop with a view to strengthening the overall capacity of women as well as six months activity implementation assessment and generating new ideas for future activities.

The President of the union, Ms. Tekea Tesfamichael, said that the objective of the workshop was to identify the strength and shortcoming besides sharing experiences that could help remedy the shortcomings.

Research papers on "Empowering Women vis-à-vis Gender Equality", and "Role of Integration in Empowering Women" were presented by Ms. Tekea Tesfamichael and Mr. Kiflai Andemichael respectively.

Meanwhile, the branch of the National Union of Eritrean Women in Anseba region has organized a seminar in Keren with a view to

empowering women.

Reports indicated that the union has conducted commendable activities in developing women's economic welfare, raising their political awareness, provision of health services to women, in addition to developing their administrative and skills.

The Union's branch head in the region, Ms. Amna Hassan, called for greater participation in national development endeavors, and conducting continues follow up on the progress regarding the beneficiaries of micro-credit and saving scheme.

Ms. Zaid Mesfun, Head of Administration and Finance in the union branch, also stated that effort to develop the educational capacity of women, and empowering their economic capacity, need to be reinforced.



## INSTALLATION OF ROADSIDE SAFETY MIRRORS



The Eritrean Road Traffic Safety Association in cooperation with Total Eritrea have installed roadside safety mirrors along the road sides of Asmara-Massawa line with a view to enhancing the visibility of vehicles and other road users.

The Commander of the Eritrean Police, Col. Mehari Tsegay, explained that ensuring the safety of road users is a task that requires integrated effort. He further commended Total Eritrea for its contribution in ensuring road safety as well as other community and environmental activities.

The Managing Director of Total Eritrea, Mr. Adge Kacou, said on his part that in addition to its business activities the firm is

playing due part in ensuring road traffic and environmental safety. He further indicated that Total Eritrea is engaged in promoting sustainable development by taking part in major projects including health, education and the energy sectors.

The Chairman of the Eritrean Road Traffic Safety Association, Mr. Estifanos Habtemariam, said on his part that the 51 road safety mirrors installed on the road sides of the Asmara- Massawa road would make due contribution in the reduction of road accident and ensuring safety of road users.

Similar roadside safety mirrors would be installed in other major highways with a view to reducing road accident.

## ASMARA TECHNICAL SCHOOL GRADUATES 200 STUDENTS

200 students including 80 females have graduated in certificate from Asmara Technical School.

The fields of study include auto mechanics, engineering, drafting, electricity, electronics, steel works, surveying, and wood works.

The Director of the school, Mr. Kebede Tedla, called on the graduates to apply the training they received practically on the ground and play due part in the nation building process.

Congratulating the students on their graduation day, the Director General of Technical and Vocational training in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Tesfai Sium, called on the graduates to live up to expectation.

Asmara Technical School is graduating for the 58<sup>th</sup> time and has so far graduated over 10 thousand students.

## ERITREAN COMMUNITY FESTIVAL IN CANADA

Eritrean nationals residing in western Canada have recently conducted annual festival in the city of Edmonton with patriotic zeal.

The festival was attended by Eritrean citizens from the Canadian cities of Calgary, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon and Vancouver and witnessed seminar on the objective situation in the homeland, discussion regarding the activities of the community, cultural and artistic performances as well as children's sports program.

The Head of Consular Affairs, Mr.

Ahmed Amin, gave briefing on the progress of the national development drive besides political and diplomatic activities.

The participants also held

discussion focusing on strengthening unity and active participation in national development programs and bequeath the noble societal and national values to the young generation.





# Development

## Securing the Future Through Renewable Energy

**Kesete Gebrehiwet**

The availability of sustainable energy is determinant in ensuring an all-rounded development of a country. Infrastructural development is mainly dependent on the availability of abundant sources of energy. Renewable sources of energy such as solar, wind and thermal energy are dependable. There is high potential of such sources of energy in Eritrea although they have not been exploited fully.

Generation of solar energy entirely depends on countries exposure to sun light and fortunately Eritrea is endowed not only with solar but all sorts of renewable energy.

Eritrea uses non-renewable energy sources for its electricity supply and this has been a bottle neck in the implementation of various development undertakings. Considering that solar energy reduces dependence on non-renewable energy, agro-industrial activities, water supply projects and other infrastructures will be implemented in accordance to the set out time frame provided that the supply of electricity is ensured through various sources of renewable energy.

The expansion of renewable energy to all parts of Eritrea will be an important step in the fight against climate change. So, besides the generation of electricity, renewable

energy will make a difference in environmental protection.

E-Tech Eritrea has taken an initiative to install solar energy of 122 megawatts in different parts of Eritrea. The initiative so far taken is a good start and is expected to make a difference in the long run.

Considering that solar energy is a clean and renewable energy source and once a solar panel is installed, energy can be produced free of charge and the fact that it lasts forever with a very little maintenance cost to keep solar cells running, solar energy is Eritrea's considerable assets that needs to be exploited to the maximum possible level.

E-Tech Eritrea was entirely engaged in assembling computers and other Information Technology (IT) related hard-ware from 2003 to 2016. E-Tech is now working in the installation of solar and wind energy.

E-Tech's primary objective is to harness the country's potential of alternative sources of energy to the maximum level. It is now generally taking part in the efforts that have been exerted to make a difference in the socio-economic activities of the country and particularly in the installation of renewable energy.

The initiative taken by E-Tech Eritrea in Gergera and Adi-Halo in the installation of solar energy is a commendable pilot project and will be extended to other parts of Eritrea.

Reports show that the surface of the earth receives 120,000 terawatts of solar radiation (sunlight) – 20,000 times more power than what is needed to supply the entire world.

Eritrea's potential of solar energy is beyond imagination. Almost all parts of the country are suitable for the generation of solar energy.

As long as there is solar radiation, solar energy is sustainable and there



**Maj. Aklilu Habtemariam**

is no way for over-consumption. It is with this natural asset that a number of development undertakings could be easily implemented without dependence on non-renewable sources of energy. Once the initial investment is made the overturn is highly profitable.

Ensuring supply of potable water, provision of healthcare and education facilities and environmental preservation are among the priorities of the country. E-Tech Eritrea is, therefore, playing a leading role in the implementation of a far sighted vision.

The Government of Eritrea has now given E-tech a mandate for the installation of renewable energy infrastructures. According to Maj. Aklilu Habtemariam, E-Tech's Manager, E-tech has started to implement the setout solar energy projects in phases.

"The installation of solar energy in Gergera is just a continuation of activities we implemented in Adi-Hallo. The project here in Gergera has taken only three months. We have acquired substantial skill in the project implemented in Adi-Hallo in terms of efficiency and speed," Maj. Aklilu said.

As regards the technological know-how of the youth who are taking part in the project, Maj. Aklilu said that the solar energy installation project has enabled a number of youth to acquire skills through hands on experience of the job. The youth are now the lead implementers of the project with a little assistance of an engineer. Members of the 28<sup>th</sup>

to 30<sup>th</sup> round of national service are now taking part in the solar energy installation program. They are confident and have acquired efficiency in carrying out the tasks.

While speaking of the efficiency and speed in the implantation of the first and second solar energy projects Maj. Aklilu said "The first project was a little bit delayed as we were all new to such tasks. But, the second project was well organized and is progressing as planned. We have also completed 70% of leveling of site for another solar energy project."

The installation of a total of 122 megawatts of solar energy in different parts of the country is expected to make a difference in supplying electricity to various projects of water pumping systems for potable water supply, health and education facilities and fisheries activities.

The primary objective of the project is to supply electricity to rural areas that have not yet been connected to the national grid. The off grid system will ensure supply of electricity to areas that have not been beneficiaries. "Residents in rural areas have the right to make use of electricity and we are trying to reach them through renewable energy to boost their socio-economic activities," Maj. Aklilu elaborated.

A few people have participated in the Adi-Hallo project, but in the second project that is being carried out in Gergera a number of young people are taking part and, thus, playing an important role towards a speedy installation. The youth who are working in the solar energy program said that they are all working together in one site for the time being. But since they have now acquired the required skill they will be divided into four groups and assigned to different sites and this will speed up the implementation of the project.

Besides the technical know-how, the youth at the project have increased

their knowledge of renewable energy and the impact it could make in various cultural and socio-economic activities of the country. They are very keen to be part of the project and that is why they are working with a strong passion.

Dejen Okbe, a participant in the solar panel installation activity, said "Dependence on non-renewable energy will be minimized. Since the human power has been doubled the project will be finalized as quickly as possible."

Simon Mebrahtom is also participating in the solar energy installation program so far implemented in Gergera and Adi-Hallo. He is a graduate of Asmara Technical School in the field of General Electronics. He has been working in computer assembly, and he is now taking part in the installation of renewable energy. He said "I am working in the field I studied and am gradually upgrading my know-how through skill transfer.

Eng. Desale Meharzghi is a graduate in Electrical Engendering from Eritrea Institute of Technology. He has been providing technical assistance in the installation of solar panels. "The project in Adi-Hallo was our first experience. We have learnt a great deal from the project and the task is no more new for us and that is why we have implemented the second project with ease," he said. "The human power is also redoubled now."

E-Tech is now planning to implement similar projects in Adi-Keyih and Kerkebet. The experience so far gained will have a great impact towards the speedy implementation. The youth participants of the project reiterate that the more experience they gain the more they will make a difference.

All the participants of the solar panel installation project said "We are trying to make a difference through collective efforts."



**ERITREA  
PROFILE**

**Published Every  
Wednesday & Saturday**

**Acting Editor  
Amanuel Mesfun**

P.O.Box: 247

Tel: 11-41-14

Fax: 12-77-49

E-mail:

eritreaprofilenews@gmail.com

Advertisement: 12-50-13

**Layout  
Azmera Berhane  
Aida Johar**



# SpotLight

## This Summer in Asmara

Natnael Yebio W.

Summer is here this year with happy tidings of peace. There is a sense of relief in the air and people are looking to the future with great anticipation and hope.

In a country like Eritrea where the dark clouds come to pour their blessings on parched lands once a year, rainwater is a precious commodity. They come accompanied by thunder and lightning and water the highlands mainly during the three months of June, July and August. Indeed, the eagerness with which people wait for the rains to come around transcends human understanding.

This is the season to visit the homeland. Tour the country and get acquainted with all things Eritrean. To those who live in the country it is a time to visit a relative in the village and to those from Diaspora don't you think it is about time you visited.

If tourism means going places for pleasure or for adventure one might as well try one's attic or backyard. The old photo that you had tossed as useless five years ago may now be worth thousands of dollars, and the turf in your backyard could be hiding the skull of a Neanderthal man or the temple of a very ancient civilization.

Long before tourism became commercialized, people went to their old aunts' houses in villages

for a visit and for an informal tour. There they found things that they never thought had existed before and expressed their admiration telling bedridden aunts or crippled uncles that they would come back next Christmas for more stealing..... er..... Chatting. Under their coats are hidden precious vases, paintings or even gold coins of the previous century.

When you go to Keren or Massawa, don't always think about visiting the tourist sites that are portrayed in colored post cards or in travel brochures. Open your eyes and take a look at things that people seldom stop to admire. Have you ever seen a sky as blue as the Eritrean sky? What about the tea shops along the road? Get out of the bus or whatever it is you are riding and talk to the children or peanut vendors. Look at the way they dress, their hairdos and watch their manners.

A German tourist was once traveling to Keren with his Eritrean colleague. On the roadway he spotted the hulk of a burned out tank rusting in the sun in the ravine. He told his Eritrean fellow to stop the car, took out his camera and began to take shots.

"What's so important about it," asked the Eritrean.

"That is East German tank brought here by the Soviets," he explained.

On the way the Eritrean told him a lot about the liberation struggle that he had never known before.

"Did the freedom fighters have similar tanks to drive away the enemy?" asked the German.

"Sir," the Eritrean said, "When the East Germans made or assembled the tanks, they did so for the Freedom fighters,"

He laughed.

There are many things to discover if one opens one's eyes wide enough. You can ask about the road itself, when it was built, by whom and for what purpose.'

If people were to open their eyes and minds, they wouldn't have to go further than their own neighborhood to wonder at the hidden things waiting to be discovered and appreciated.

Once upon a time a man who happened to walk in the midday sun felt exhausted and strolled into a small teashop and ordered a tea and began to look around. And what did he see? Old mineral-water bottles tucked in a rusty crate. He took out one and examined the label. He could not believe what he saw. There in bold letters were printed **FORTEMENTE RADIOATIVA**. Imagine a label telling you that radioactivity is good for your health. He looked at the date: 1935! That's more like it. In the early days of the discovery of radium

by Madame Curie, people thought mistakenly that radioactivity was good for health and I can imagine Parisian gentlemen getting a lethal dose of the deadly rays in the hope that they would be relieved of their tuberculosis or even syphilis. The Italians who arrived in Eritrea brought the mistaken notion with them and made promotional ad to attract health nuts in the colony.

There are many types of tourism. There is sex tourism, gastronomic tourism, tourism to find oneself, tourism to lose oneself, eco-tourism, and tourism to revive what others have given up for dead.

In ancient times, the seers and sages toured the world to find out and befriend good and virtuous people. They traveled on foot to find God among men. Why not try it in these modern times. It may take you a life time, but it is worth trying. In such a search for goodness, one can find oneself in the end.

For less spiritually inclined, a simple trip with an open and tolerant heart and mind can result in a wealth of experience and a closer encounter with the mysteries of the past. One day a group of Swiss tourists were on their way to Massawa. Their mission was simple: visit the Red Sea, take pictures, sunbathe, mechanically express admiration of what they see, and finally send postcards home to relatives and friends, with a view to tormenting them with a series of video or slide shows for the rest of their lives.

But one lady among them seemed to have more discerning eyes and analytical mind than the rest. She was going to a seaside resort, okay, but she developed more interest in the baboons that crossed their path about fifteen kilometers from Asmara.

"These are the Hamadyas baboon of the Egyptians," she said.

"What?" one of her friends asked quizzically.

"They used to be worshipped by ancient Egyptians," she continued.

Earlier on, a visitor to my aunt's



house had told me that the cat they kicked around and tormented for not catching mice had once upon a time ruled over Egyptian souls who, whenever it died, had their eye brows shaved as a sign of respect. Some story that is!

Some of us have probably taken a steaming ride on the Eritrean ride that looks like it has just stepped out of early cowboy films. Were you curious enough to get down from the train and read the letters that spell its origin? Some are from Krup, some from Fiat.

There are quite a lot of things to do during the summer in Eritrea. To begin with there is a festival! In Sawa! The graduation of the current round of students who had been in Sawa for the last 10 months. If you have been lucky enough to get a ticket to the festival, then, you'll surely know the spectacle and experience that comes with visiting the fabled Sawa. In Asmara, there are many things to see such as the Mosque, the Latin Cathedral, the Market place, lots of art deco buildings, etc. But what about Haddish Addi, Akhria, and Geza Banda. Go there and ask the people the way they live, look at the mud wall building, you will learn a lot.

As you stroll along the streets of Asmara, don't just look at the buildings only. Look at the walls and the streets, you will discover a lot of things.

This will increase your wonder at your surroundings and will make your stay in any town very rewarding.







# Gubtish; the Home Based Body Treatment

**Lwam Kahsay**

“Gubtish”, commonly called “tish”, is like a sauna bath Eritrean women use. “Gubtish” literally means to be in a fume or smoke steam. It is a smoke bath using aromatic plants and trees.

It is believed to have a healing power, and almost all Eritrean ethnic groups are familiar with it. Depending on the weather, it is highly used in the highlands of Eritrea. At the end of spring women start to collect branches and leaves of trees for “Tish”. “Weiba” (local plant), “Gonak” (local plant), “Tahses”, “Awle” (Olivetree) and “Hehet” are some of the trees often used. The moisture in the plants is very important, so they must be fresh.

Christians are so careful with the gathering of the plants. Holydays like Saint Mary, birth of Christ and others are highly respected that collecting is not allowed during holidays. There is a belief that if a woman collects the trees or has “Tish” during the holidays it is certain that something bad would happen to her as a punishment. In Muslim societies Ramadan has high value and so “Gubtish” is not allowed during the Ramadan season.

Just like any other traditional practices “Gubtish” has its own procedures. The first step is making sure that the collecting day is not a holiday. After gathering tree branches, the next step is to arrange

a small room near the living room which is known as “Merebae” in Tigrigna. The small room is called “Enda-Gubtish”, a place for Tish. Then with in the room they make a hole on the ground for the fire. Two or three blankets are prepared for the woman to wear in order to protect the smoke from escaping. “Likay” butter, is applied on the woman’s hair.

At last the woman gets undressed and another assisting woman starts the fire, and puts the plants and tree branches on the fire. Then she places a small seat made up of wood, known as “Duka”, for the woman who is about to be in the “Tish”. The woman sit on the stool and the assisting woman covers her with the blankets one after the other.



The woman starts to sweat from the smoke. A traditional drink like “Siwa” or “Tihni” is prepared to replace the water discharged from

the body in the form of sweat. The process can take 45 minutes to an hour at a time. This continues for three to seven days. Most of the time “Tish” is done at night. At the end of the practice the woman moves away from the smoke and cooled for 10 to 15 minutes after that she takes her shower and feel the relief she was expecting to have.

“Gubtish” is not only about beauty. It also has important contribution in our health. It is classified within traditional medicine. It reduces arthralgia and joint pain. Some of the plants used in “Tish” (olive tree and weiba) act as muscle relaxants and some have antimicrobial property that provides protects from infection. Our skin gets enough moisture and yellowish color. Culturally it

is believed that it facilitates labor for pregnant woman though it is not supported medically. It is also claimed to: reduce the discomfort, bloating and tiredness associated with menstruation, regulate irregular menstrual cycles, treat fungus infection, relieve symptoms of menopause, treat endometriosis, speed up the after-birth healing process. However it is not recommended for People with heart diseases and asthmatic problems.

Modern beauty spas seem to be undermining the importance of “Tish”. But there are still a lot of licensed people who give “Gubtish”.

Sauna, body steam, and Moroccan bath are some of the popular beauty treatments in Asmara at this time. This is only an alternative for those who cannot tolerate the smoke and heat that of “Tish”. The most important advantage of “Tish” compared to the modern body treatments, is



that any woman can do it at home. There is almost no expense. Even in the licensed places the price is less than that of the sauna bath and body steam. In body steam and sauna bath nothing oily and natural is applied to the body except body scrubs. Eden beauty salon, Expo hotel, comfort zone are some of the appreciated “Gubtish” service givers.

“Gubtish” is practiced east African countries like Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia as well. Dukhan is a ritual

in which the body is smoked with a special species of woods in northern Sudan. The thing that makes Dukhan different from “Gubtish” is that it has frown upon the practice amongst men.

It is a chronicle since our society attaches their life with plants. This great gift that we receive from our ancestors should be appreciated and preserved as long as it is not a harmful tradition and has a healing power.

## Sandiago, the Eritrean . . .

**C**ontinued from page 8

*Many young comedians look up to you and are fond of your comments on their works. What is your opinion of Eritrea’s aspiring comedians?*

They are incredibly talented for their age. They are young and smart. They are accurate and attentive to what would satisfy the public. They are educated and that is why I appreciate most of them. They are eager to grow and work hard for it. So they make me proud as my own children. You know how traditionally our community retains having offspring as a blessing as they are expected to live the legacy of their parents? Well, that is how I feel about young Eritrean comedians. They’ll keep me and our profession alive long after I am gone. I truly

respect them.

*Thank you Sandiago for being such a dear artist that the Eritrean community cherishes with extraordinary love. And thank you for your time. Is there anything you want to say before we end our Q&A today?*

I want to urge the Eritrean Cultural Affairs to be more attentive to all comedians and their works as it is a big component of culture and arts. I want to remind stakeholders and the public in general to support their comedians because comedians are the reflection of the society. And off the topic, if by the time my interview is published, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Mohamed, is here I want to welcome him. I hope peace and stability will reign in our region so that the joy of comedy can spread its wings. Tons of love to my fans!





# Book Review

## Tsihifto - Thoughtful Poetry Beneath the Surface

Abraham Habte

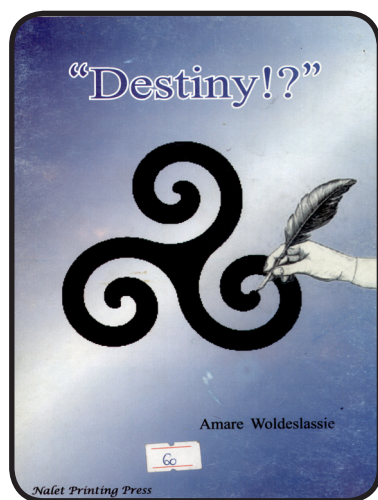
Emily Dickinson, the eccentric American poet, said this on how she found out if a piece of writing was poetry: "If I read a book [and] it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way."

For me, a piece of writing becomes poetry if it impresses me so much that I have to read the piece more than twice or thrice to derive as much enjoyment as possible out of it. If the beauty, structure, originality, and language of the piece make me read the piece again and again, then I know the piece is a wonderful poetry. That piece may have the format of a prose. It doesn't matter if its purpose is not entertainment. Content also doesn't matter much as long as it promotes the cause of humanity. If the piece has beauty and shows brilliant creativity, for me, that piece is poetry.

I know my criteria can't be used to define poetry. Neither can it be used as a yardstick by which we tell certain pieces as poetry, and others as prose. But, neither is Emily Dickinson's definition good enough for the same purpose for people can raise many objections against it; they may give examples of writing that make them feel the way she has described but are not, strictly speaking, poetry.

By applying my criteria, I was able to see a number of beautiful poems, poems I have read many times, in Amare Woldelessie's poetry book, *'Tsihifto'* (Tigrigna for Destiny), a collection of 43 poems published in 2014. *'Tsihifto'* brings some of the poems Memhir Amare wrote between 1983 and 2008. It is his first book, according to the 'Foreword'. (Unfortunately, the poems are not dated, which could have helped us compare and see the poet's development as a writer over the years.)

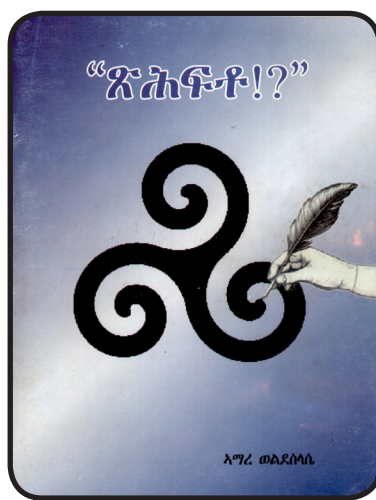
Memhir Amare, a staff writer of *Haddas Ertra*, the Tigrigna



daily, is the editor of *'Tigrignan Tezarebtun'* (Tigrigna and its Speakers), a page on Tigrigna language in the paper. He is best known as the translator to Tigrigna of *'Jeppe of the Hills'*, a humorous play broadcasted on Eri-Tv many years back and later published by Hidri Publishers. A few years back, he translated stories, one of which (I remember) was serialized in *Haddas Ertra*. So far he has published two poetry books, *'Tsihifto'* (Destiny) and *Mesagro* (Transition), and a collection of translated plays, *'Yeppe Wedi Kurba'*.

Reading *'Tsihifto'* is a pleasure if one is a bilingual in English and Tigrigna, though a reader fluent in either would have no problem enjoying the poems. An English-Tigrigna bilingual reader may read both versions and compare. But the real pleasure of reading the book lies in comparing the poems. In a poem or two, one may not find a part of a poem in the Tigrigna version very clear, and you refer to the English version. Comparing the poems, one notices that one or the other version is much more powerful than the other. Similarly, one also notes that one of the versions clarifies a point well, not well stated in the other. In a few cases, a point is stressed in one version while not clearly explained in the other, not as clearly as one wished. In some poems, one feels if one was not reading a new poem, and not a translation. In all these cases, one has the freedom to go and check the other version, and see the poem in a new light. And derive some more pleasure out of the poems.

Through his poems, Memhir



Amare raises a number of issues ranging from education or training, human nature, war, excuses, curiosity, and superficiality to other matters that have caught his attention, and he shares his thoughts with us. Reading the poems, one notices that he doesn't see like most of us; he sees things with new eyes, observing things that escape the attention of most of us. Often discussing the thoughts, experiences, and desires of religious people, monks and nuns, he shares his thoughts on the nature of authority, hierarchy, rules, and pragmatism.

Memhir Amare points are hidden deep, like gold or some precious mineral under the ground. The reader has to scratch under the surface if he is to get the 'message', the point he is trying to make. Incidentally, in his poems he has men and women who fail to scratch beneath the surface, are duped by appearances, and fall victim to some smarter men. Through a number of his poems he warns us to look closer and dig deeper lest we are taken in by appearances.

Let's take this poem, 'the Deacon' as an example:

By chance if in a vicinity

There is, say a deacon

Who speaks on and on

Accusing a pope

A priest or a monk

His current conviction

Stays until consecration  
Then through experience

Discovering the essence

His new sermon too

Will be converted to

"Do as I say

Not as I do"

Often, one feels one has gained some wisdom after reading Memhir Amare's poems. (Of course, you have to get used to his style, with short, telegrammatic sentences. In the Tigrigna version, he takes the economy of words so seriously that one has difficulty understanding his poems at first reading.) One way or another, his poems touch the reader or at least make him think. In 'Luck', in which he tells us about an ugly zoo monkey, which doesn't do anything but 'dines every good thing' and a horse, which uses force, he tells us success depends on handling matters with care, and not on luck. In 'Joke' we read about the petition of some monks and nuns. They request of the new pope (who was one of them sometime before) that marriage be allowed among them. Notice how the monks found the situation changed, and the irony of their new situation:

Who labeled a joke

As an attempt to mock

At every nun and monk

Who demanded a right

Without a violent fight

To have a new life

As a man and wife

Later luck pushed a monk

To the chair of a pope

Till all waited with hope,

To see the demand fulfilled

Even when the monk elected

Has immeasurably changed

In 'Who is not a Writer?' (notice the title), he comes back again to the issues of appearances. In

it, he reminds us not to crown published writers as unparalleled until we see the works of the unpublished writers. "Wait," Memhir Amare cautions us. "Till you see the people that have not been published." In another, 'Men of Excuse' he invites us to look closer into people's excuses for they could be used against other more able people. "A great man in his land/Is not given a hand/ Those quoting such a fact/From deeds of the past/ Have a reason subtle/ To suppress the able."

I am assuming the poems were first written in Tigrigna, and then were translated to English. (I could find no clue that suggests any of the poems were originally written in English. Many things suggest that they were first written in Tigrigna.) However, the poet says little about the translation of the poems to English. For example, who is the English version for? If it is for Tigrigna speakers, they have the Tigrigna version. If it is, then as I have assumed, for non-Tigrigna readers, I think some clarifications should have been included. In 'Free Market' and 'New ... New...', a word or two about the Tigrigna words (*Hadish mengedi*, *Edaga Hamus* etc.) would have helped non-Tigrigna readers appreciate the poems better. Without such an explanation, it is hard for a non-Tigrigna reader to understand and appreciate 'Free Market'. Market (in English) and *edaga* (in Tigrigna) mean the same thing, which is important for the appreciation of the poem. But above all, the necessity for such explanation becomes much more important when non-Tigrigna readers read 'Attraction through Repulsion'. It is true readers can understand the Eritrean names in the poem have negative connotations. But, reading poetry is not guess work. In poetry, the meaning of each and every word is vital. One can easily see how a reader's appreciation can be greatly heightened if he were given the meaning of such names as *Godefay*, *Zibaay* etc.

In general, the book is an excellent collection. I have enjoyed most of the poems though I had to reread a number of them, which is natural.



Hitseito Street, No. 245, House No.40/42, Teravolo; P.O.Box 10688; Tel.+291-1-153986; Asmara, Eritrea.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Asmara Mining Share Company (AMSC) invites qualified Eritrean applicants for the following posts:

D) HUMAN RESOURCE:

1. POSITION TITLE: Human Resources Supervisor
2. CONTRACT TYPE: Two Years, renewable
3. NUMBER REQUIRED: 1 (one)
4. PRIMARY FUNCTION:

To lead in the delivery of human resource services with specific responsibility for providing information to other HR staff and company employees regarding policies and regulations; addressing a variety of issues and/or providing general support; overseeing the maintenance of records, files and databases of personnel actions, evaluations, issues; and assisting the HR Superintendent in ensuring that personnel functions conform to all applicable regulatory requirements.

5. MAIN FUNCTIONS:

1. Administration
2. Supervision
3. HR Documentation
4. Performance Management
5. Terminations

TASK DESCRIPTION EXPANDED TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREAS

1. Administration

- 1.1. Supervise, monitor to ensure that all Human Resources activities are captured in the relevant systems.
- 1.2. Ensure that the promotion process is followed through in line with the promotion procedure.
- 1.3. Ensure that HR report deadlines are met.
- 1.4. Supervise and ensure that all HR issues are handled and finalised.
- 1.5. Supervise and ensure that all HR processes are followed in line with policies and procedures.

2. Supervision

- 2.1. Ensure that recruitment is followed in line with the recruitment policy and procedure.
- 2.2. Monitor Shortlisting of candidates to be sent to HOD and that recruitment deadlines are met.
- 2.3. Verify employment contract before final approval by Human Resources Manager.
- 2.4. Ensure that process is followed for induction of new employees.

3. HR Documentation

- 3.1. Ensure that all relevant HR documentation is filed accurately and in line with audit requirements.
- 3.2. Signing off of leave application forms in line with entitlement and policy.
- 3.3. Monitor that all documentation for promotions are captured and signed off.
- 3.4. Ensure that all required documentation is processed by HR Officers timeously to meet Payroll deadline.

4. Performance Management

- 4.1. Supervise the Performance Management process in line with the policy and ensure that deadlines are met by Managers.
- 4.2. Supervise and ensure that information captured on HR system and that

training needs and individual development requirements are summarised.

4.3. Provide guidance to management on Performance Management process to ensure true reflection of individual’s performance.

5. Terminations

- 5.1. Signing off of resignation letters and ensure that notice period is in line with employee contract.
- 5.2. Ensure that termination forms are signed off by the manager.
- 5.3. Ensure that severance pay policy is followed.
- 5.4. Exit interviews to be signed off and escalated to manager/supervisor as well as addressing issues of concern.
- 5.5. Ensure that exit clearance forms are signed off by relevant managers prior to final sign off by HR Manager.
- 5.6. Review certificate of service letters prior to Human Resources Manager signing off

6. REQUIRED QUALIFICATION: BA Degree in Human Resources or Business Management or Personnel Administration.

7. KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE :

- Minimum 6 Years’ experience in General Human Resources Departments.
- Minimum 3 Years’ experience in HR Department under Mining Industries.
- Proficient on HR software package.

8. SKILLS:

Technical Skills	Behavioural Skills
Computer Literacy (MS Office – Intermediate)	Communication (English and Local language)
Attention to detail	Assertiveness
Report writing skill	Interpersonal Relations
Knowledge of HR Policies, Procedures and Processes	Ability to meet deadlines
Manage the audit requirements	Accuracy
Labour Legislation knowledge	Confidentiality
Business Communication skills	Integrity/Business Ethic
Financial acumen	Ability to work under pressure
Administrative skill	Strategic Thinking
Presentation skill	

9. GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIRMENTS:

- Place of Work: Asmara and Mine Sites near Asmara
- Salary: As per company salary scale

10. Additional CONSIDERATIONS:N

- Copy of documents indicating exemption from / completion of national service must be submitted with application.
- Testimonial documents of work experience and educational qualifications along with a recently prepared CV must be submitted with application.
- Should be able to present copy of release letter from current employer if accepted for the post.
- All application documents will not be returned back to sender, thus make sure to send only photocopy of documents.
- Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview.
- Closing date for application is 10 days from the date of announcement.
- Applications should be sent through the post office only.
- Interested applicants should submit their application to the following address:- **Asmara Mining Share Company, P.O.BOX 10688. Asmara, Eritrea.**

Note to Non- Eritrean applicants:

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





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VACANCY  
ANNOUNCEMENT

Asmara Mining Share Company (AMSC) invites qualified Eritrean applicants for the following posts:

C) COST ACCOUNTANT

1. POSITION TITLE: Cost Accountant Officer
2. CONTRACT TYPE: Two Years, renewable
3. NUMBER REQUIRED: 1 (one)
4. PRIMARY FUNCTION:  
To analyse departmental costs, commodity review of costs between cost centres, work with project groups to ensure proper reporting of project costs, analyse costs monthly and quarterly, current and prior year.
5. ESSENCIAL FUNCTIONS:
  - Perform daily and monthly cost accounting duties and entries.
  - Analyse factory overhead cost drivers and develop a methodology for allocating these costs to specific cost centres.
  - Examine and review unusual cost records and ensure cost data is allocated correctly.
  - Report on margin/profitability by job and department.
  - Report on periodic job variances and their cause, focusing on material spending and contract service.
  - Reconcile project related General Ledger Accounts.
  - Analyse operating results and trends in terms of cost
  - Track the compilation of project cost into fixed assets and cost out the assets once the related project has been completed.
  - Conduct analyses to fixed asset as requested by management.
  - Perform fixed asset management and reporting.
  - Analyse capital budgeting requests.
  - Review standard and actual costs for inaccuracies.
  - Perform data mining and operational cost analysis as requested.
  - Initiate and monitor physical inventory and cycle counts to ensure inventory accuracy, investigate variances and resolve issues. Reporting as required.
  - Other duties as assigned.
6. REQUIRED QUALIFICATION: Bachelor Degree or Diploma -

in Accounting

7. KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE REQUIRED :

- Minimum 5 years of Cost Accounting experience for Bachelor Degree holder & above 10 years for Diploma holder.
- Good experience in working with engineering and manufacturing Environments.
- Knowledge in mining accounting is preferable.
- Good experience with automated accounting soft wares.
- Experience in creating solutions and improving processes.

8. SKILLS:

Technical Skills	Behavioural Skills
Generally excellent MS Office computer skills, & Proficiency in Excel	Excellent communication skills & high confidence in stating professional opinions.
In-depth understanding of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	Works well under pressure and the ability to collaborate with multi departmental Team
Numeracy skills	Ability to meet deadlines
Reporting skills	Interpersonal Relations
Excellent analytical skills with a strong focus on accuracy, & attention to details.	Integrity, Assertiveness, Confidentiality etc.

9. GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIRMENTS:

- Place of Work: Asmara and Mine Sites near Asmara
- Salary: As per company salary scale

10. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:N

- Copy of documents indicating exemption from / completion of national service must be submitted with application.
- Testimonial documents of work experience and educational qualifications along with a recently prepared CV must be submitted with application.
- Should be able to present copy of release letter from current employer if accepted for the post.
- All application documents will not be returned back to sender, thus make sure to send only photocopy of documents.
- Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview.
- Closing date for application is 10 days from the date of announcement.
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**Note to Non- Eritrean applicants:**  
Please send a copy of your application to Aliens Employment Permit Affairs, P.O.Box 7940. Asmara, Eritrea.  
**SIDERATIONS**



Q and A

# Santiago, the Eritrean Prodigy of Comedy

Billion Temesghen

Thank heavens the world is not a rental place. Had it been so, God, the owner, would be telling us to move out or that the rent was up like house owners do. Ghirmay Yohannes, aka Santiago.

*With more than three decades of expertise, Ghirmay Yohannes, better known by his nick name Santiago, is a comedian of high and mighty esteem. He is the source of laughter to the Eritrean community, or better still, Tigrigna speaking communities in the Horn of Africa. Ghirmay Santiago means a perpetual urge of smiles. For today's Q&A we went to the set of 'Meselet', Santiago's latest weekly sitcom.*

**Thank you for your time, Santiago. It is such an honor to have you here with us.**

The pleasure is all mine. Thank you for having me. Hello to you all, it is me, Ghirmay Yohannes Santiago, with Eritrea Profile.

**Did you know you were going to be a comedian?**

No I didn't. You don't know what you want to be until you discover what you are really good at. I was an ordinary child growing up. But, of course, I like being in the company of my friends and family. During the armed struggle for Independence I started telling jokes and my comrades seemed to enjoy them so much that they would ask me to tell them more. Some of the jokes I told back then were from comic books I read but most of them were spontaneous. It means that situations would lead me into making up jokes of my own. Yet again, I still didn't know I wanted to be a comedian. However, I did like writing. I enjoyed writing essays of all kinds. I published some in the magazines that were famous during the armed struggle. I kept writing even after independence. Moreover, I slowly got a reputation in hosting shows. And that was where I realized that I liked telling jokes and that people accepted my innovations. That's it. That is how it all started.

**So how were your first steps as a real comedian?**

I think it was in 1995, I am not sure, but I was invited to work on a package of entertainment where I'd be hosting a competition show which included mime competitions and more. I am taking about the origins of 'Teawet'. 'Teawet' was an entertainment package which grew in the course of the years in its run of almost twenty years. In the package we included competition shows, mime, telephone pranks, hidden

camera, kids' talk show and many more gigs to spread laughter amongst our people. I was responsible for hosting and arranging the general package though every gig included in 'Teawet' had its own production managers. The show became addictive and people were longing for it with excitement.

**Despite your success in the broadcast media you still remain faithful to essay writing. Tell me about it please.**

Like I said writing has been with me since I was young. But as I was immersed in the profession of comedy I also shifted my writing to comic essay. I have a column in 'Meneisey' magazine. It is called 'Zelku dea...'. The literal translation of 'Zelku dea...' in English would be 'What I mean is...'. Just from the column's name you can understand that there is a comic vibe to it. Even though my ultimate goal is to make people laugh while writing, and honestly while doing all of the other activities related to my comedy, I plan on passing messages that go beyond amusement. And for this special focus I use comic essay as one of my tools. Therefore, 'Zelku dea...', or, 'What I mean is...' is a column that raises controversial issues and with a touch of satire extends deep, meaningful critical and constructive messages.

**You are also much known for your standup comedy gigs.**

After I stopped participating in the production of 'Teawet', I focused on producing standup comedy shows. I also started, on the side, learning ventriloquism. For the very reason that the community was not familiar with ventriloquism, at first I was concerned that it might not bring enough laughter to my community with ventriloquism. Ventriloquism is the art of manually moving puppets,

without you have to move your lips and seemingly making the puppets talk. So, that was new when we first started. But contrary to what I had thought, people loved the art. Kids became my number one supporters when I was doing ventriloquism. Therefore, side by side with standup comedy and just general comic gigs I normally do ventriloquism.

**You do all sorts of comedy. You do gigs, you do standup comedy and even ventriloquism. It might be easy, for you, to even do it all at once, as you are a professional comedian, may I ask, is there any difference that you feel moving from one form of comedy to another?**

There are some differences, of course, because the standup comedy, gigs and ventriloquism are all different techniques within the field of comedy. Jokes have no nationality. Jokes migrate like birds from one community to another and can even travel through generations. So telling jokes is a lot more different than doing standup comedy as standup comedy is more elaborate. It is more of a team work. There could be writers despite the main comedian, you may call it, the face of the gig. Research is required and the topics raised are often contemporary. But of course this is not a universal truth because techniques might differ from one comedian to another. So to answer your question, yes, there are plenty of differences because comedy is a vast field and the approaches might differ accordingly. Most of my works are out on DVD and on several YouTube channels. You can find my works of standup comedy, ventriloquism and live gags there.

**What is comedy to you?**

Comedy to me is the work of love. There is no other job in the world, at least for me, that spreads laughter



by chasing away sadness at least for a dozen of minutes. Art in general is a great form of culture, and comedy since is part of art, it is one of the sources of awareness. People learn more while having fun than in a serious atmosphere. Comedy is a constructive art.

**What are the challenges a comedian faces based on your experience?**

If an author or a singer comes into a room people stand up to shake hands and greet them with respect. But if a comedian walks in people would rather scream and just think of you like a doll. They ask you to tell them jokes and they won't like you if you put on a serious look. Honestly, there is nothing wrong with it. That is the way people show the love they have for you. After all, you are their main source of joy. But comedians too are people, so we crave for privacy. We can't smile always and make jokes to everyone we meet in our daily lives. There are days when we, too, are sad. Those are most of the challenges comedians face. Having to be happy at all times cannot be possibly human. So we hide our sadness.

*You are the source of joy to many*

**people. Is there someone that can be identified as a source of your happiness?**

My favorite comedian is Eddy Murphy. Anything that starts Eddy Murphy makes my day. See? Even a comedian needs another comedian to laugh. Above all, though, my family is my greatest source of joy.

**We are here today, in the set of 'Meselet', a sitcom where you are starring as Mr. Sengal. The sitcom has already received the love of the public. Could you please tell me about it?**

'Meselet' means reflection. The sitcom is about a family that reflects a typical Eritrean family. Every character from the father, Mr. Sengal, my character, to the youngest of the family, Mikal, Sengal's grandchild, represent different types of people within the modern Eritrean community. Like you said the ratings and reviews are great and I am contented to be part of the cast. Working with actors, writers and the production team has been awesome.

**C**ontinued on page 4