



## ERITREAN NAVAL FORCE CONCLUDES SPORTS COMPETITION



officials, and other invited guests.

Lt. Col. Teame Tiku'e, Head of Promotion and Information Staff of the Naval Force, emphasized that the annual sports competition aims to develop youth who are physically and mentally robust. He praised the contributors for their roles in the successful execution of the event.

The finale was marked by cultural and artistic performances, and awards were presented to the winners of the various sports categories.

The Eritrean Naval Force's sports competition, which has been ongoing for the past three months, concluded with enthusiasm on 13 April. The competition featured 12 different sports and included participation from eight male teams and five female teams.

The closing ceremony was attended by Col. Melake Teklemariam, Chief of Staff of Eritrea's Naval Force, various Army Commanders, government



## MEETING ON STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The National Union of Eritrean Women's branch in the Central Region reported that a strong effort will be made to enhance the organizational capacity of women and ensure their active participation in national development programs. The report was made during meetings conducted across the 16 sub-zones of the region from 14 to 16 April.

Ms. Alem Belai, head of the union branch, said efforts will be made to improve the economic and political awareness of women by identifying strengths and limitations.

Ms. Alem also emphasized the importance of conducting regular activity assessment meetings to effectively implement development programs and

achieve the objectives of the union.

The participants called for strict measures against those still practicing underage marriages and female genital mutilation and urged the union to intensify its follow-up on the condition of women. They also discussed the implementation of programs for 2024.



Photo: Yowhanes Mebrahtu

## NEWS BREIF

### SEREJEKA SUB-ZONE: 80% OF PLANTED TREE SEEDLINGS IN GOOD CONDITION

The status report on the more than 276 thousand tree seedlings planted in Serejeka sub-zone in 2023 reveals that they are thriving in good condition.

Mr. Abraham Berhane, the head of Agriculture and Land in the sub-zone, disclosed that these tree seedlings were planed across the 17 administrative areas of the sub-zone. He emphasized the importance of residents conducting regular follow-ups to ensure the sustainability of the planted trees.

Furthermore, Mr. Abraham highlighted the extensive water and soil conservation efforts undertaken by the residents to rehabilitate the environment and enhance agricultural productivity. He noted organized activities aimed at introducing improved crop seeds, modern bee hives, crop rotation practices, and household poultry farming.

The water and soil conservation initiatives have witnessed robust participation from the public, members of the Defense Forces, and participants in the student summer work program. Notably, in 28 villages within the sub-zone, a total of 3,730 hectares of terraces and 875 cubic meters of water diversion schemes have been successfully constructed.

### PRESERVATION EFFORTS OF HISTORICAL SITES IN NAKFA

In a remarkable display of community spirit, residents from Mo'o administrative area and Nakfa town, in cooperation with Defense Forces members, are actively involved in the preservation of key historical sites within Nakfa sub-zone.

The initiative, themed "The Trenches in Which Heroic Feats Were Demonstrated Are Monuments of Our Identity and History", focuses on the renovation and preservation of crucial trenches of the struggle for independence. These trenches played a pivotal role in thwarting enemy attacks and protecting the lives of freedom fighters.

Reports indicate that, to date, restoration efforts have successfully refurbished over 32.5 kilometers of these historic trenches across various sectors of the Nakfa Front.

### MEETING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

A meeting was convened in the Logo-Anseba sub-zone, in which administrators, and managing directors of the 13 administrative areas, and heads of line ministries took part aimed at discussing the implementation of outlined development programs.

Mr. Berhane Tsegay, secretary of the PFDJ in the sub-zone, reported on ongoing initiatives, including the construction of dams, installation of water pipelines, and road renovations, which have engaged over 15 thousand residents. He stressed the importance of strengthening organizational capacity as a fundamental prerequisite for the successful execution of development programs.

Providing a comprehensive overview of the current situation in the homeland, Mr. Abraham Hagos, sub-zone administrator, emphasized the need for concerted efforts from all concerned institutions and parents. He urged them to actively contribute to investments directed towards students and youth, with the aim of empowering them to play constructive roles in development endeavors.

During the meeting, participants engaged in extensive discussions on the raised issues and adopted various recommendations for further action.

# Development

## Ministry of Agriculture Concludes 2023/24 Desert and Tree Locust Assessment Meetings

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) concluded its Desert and Tree Locust Campaigns of the year 2023/24 by conducting extensive assessment meetings in Gash-Barka and Northern Red-sea (NRS) regions on 14 March and 02 April respectively.

### Northern Red Sea Region

The annual desert locust campaign assessment meeting of NRS was held in Massawa on April 2, and it was attended by Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, Ms. Asmeret Abraha, governor of NRS region, MoA director generals, senior NRS region officials, agronomists and desert locust operation participants.

Representing the governor of NRS region, Mr. Kibrom Andemichael, managing director of NRS region, gave an opening address that focused on the importance of the campaign conducted in the eastern lowlands, which he said has implications not only to the whole country but also to the Horn of Africa and beyond. Mr. Tesfit Gerezghier, acting director general of Agriculture and Land Department of NRS region, presented an extensive report regarding the general tasks accomplished, the situation of crops and grazing land, merits and challenges of the campaign, issues related to safety, and future work plans and recommendations.



Brig. Gen. Eyob Fessehaye

According to Mr. Tesfit, more than 59,000 hectares of land infested with desert locusts have been treated with ground control operations in three phases, spanned from July 2023 to March 2024, using four stations (Emahmime, Gadimhalib, Shieb and Foro) as bases. Mr. Tesfit said that this year's infestation was the largest compared to the successive campaigns held in the



Mr. Tesfit Gerezghier

the abnormal showers that started in May 2023 were the main cause for the subsequent desert locust infestation across the region, and the situation was aggravated by cross-border swarm invasions that continued for months.

Mr. Tesfit attributed the success of the campaign to the preparedness of the government in terms of logistics and pesticides; extraordinary diligence of experts, spray-mounted vehicles' drivers, members of the defense forces, and administration staff; as well as the availability of efficient communication facilities. He said that armed with 14 spray-mounted and 4 surveillance vehicles, as well as adequate back-pack manual and motorized sprayers, 1400 personnel participated in the overall campaign. The major challenges associated with the campaign, Mr. Tesfit noted, were improper application of safety measures, long-time exposure of experts to pesticides, and shortage of cleaning facilities for spraying vehicles and machines.

Mr. Tesfit finally affirmed that due to all the efforts made the infestation didn't cause any significant damage

to croplands that are around 48,000 hectares and vast area of range land. Following Mr. Tesfit's presentation, those who attended the assessment meeting commended participants of the campaign for protecting the crops and rangelands of the country from the dangerous pest. And they forwarded these recommendations: relocating campaign stations away from living quarters; maintaining Gadim-Halib cars and sprayers washing facilities; starting joint surveillance with neighboring countries; reinforcing the strategy of controlling desert locusts before they are able to fly.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Arefaine Berhe applauded those who took part in the campaign for their diligence and called for further reinforcement of the collaboration among agronomists, members of the defense forces and personnel at the regional administration office. "Having close monitoring and evaluation systems as well as reinforcing capacity development in all aspects of the campaign, the threat is not beyond our capacity" the minister underlined. Mr. Arefaine announced the plan to construct full-fledged desert locust control stations and called on all participants of the campaign to put human and environmental safety first, including using pesticides rationally and wearing full safety gears.

### Gash-Barka Region

The Gash-Barks regional meeting was conducted in Barentu on 14th March to assess the scope of tree-locust infestation in Gash-Barka region and swarm invasions from the Sudan.

Pointing out that tree-locust has become a migratory pest of serious concern, especially in Gash-Barka region, Mr. Abubeker Osman, Director General of Agriculture and Land Department of the region, said that a total of around 38,000 hectares of land across the region was exposed to tree locust infestation in 2023. Fortunately, it was contained



H.E. Arefaine Berhe

on-time thanks to the resolute and concerted measures by agronomists, local administrators and members of the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF).



The fact that the pest migrates during the day and night times and perches on tall trees posed major challenges to the operations to control the situation, Mr. Abubaker added. According to the report, in 2018 there were few instances of tree locust swarms in limited areas of Gash-Barka, such as Haikota and Shambuko, while more incidents

were recorded in 2020, which became cause for concern in the subsequent year when tree locusts were reported to have heavily impacted trees in several areas of the region. This dangerous incident was halted by the task force made up of agronomists, representatives of administrative bodies and members of the EDF.

After increased incidences of tree locust infestation were noted, the Administration of Gash-Barka region conducted a survey in a bid to identify the most vulnerable areas and patterns of infestation.

In 2023, with the coming of the rainy season, new waves of tree locust swarms were detected in a number of subzones of Gash-Barka region, with a higher degree of incidence in Goluj, Laelai-Gash and Shambuko subzones. The swarms damaged a great number of trees. Besides similar waves in August, the previous year gave rise to a moderate harm on croplands and rangelands. The northern part of Gash-Barka region, including Forto-Sawa, was found to be the major tree locust breeding area.

Participants at the assessment meeting had extensive discussions on ways and means of facilitating smooth operations, alleviating environmental impact, ensuring adherence to safety guidelines, and enhancing public participation in surveillance activities and other aspects of operations. Members of the MoA's management, concerned officials from the regional administration, and members of the EDF, on their part, put forward a number of constructive ideas, including the need for devising a community-centered strategy of locust control, in the course of the discussion.

Speaking at the assessment meeting, Brig. General Eyob Fessehaye, Commander of the Western Command, said that participation in activities related to the prevention of natural and man-made disasters is an integral part of EDF's mission. He affirmed EDF's readiness to play its role in combating any incidents of locust swarms.



Desert Locust Control Operations in Pictures

**ERITREA PROFILE**

Published Every Wednesday & Saturday

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Advertisement: 12-50-13

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# Barefoot Doctors: Ensuring Health for All

*Dr. Fikrejesus Amahazion*

Like many other countries on the continent and across the wider developing world, Eritrea is a predominantly rural country. Even as the rate of urbanization continues to increase nationwide, about two-thirds of the country's population still lives in rural regions or remote areas. As well, significantly large portions of the country's land area are characterized by extremely difficult terrain and challenging geographic conditions.

Within this wider context, Eritrea has had to take a number of measures in order to ensure that households and communities located in these areas are able to access appropriate health services and receive adequate care. One notable step taken by

of challenges related to access remain, especially for households and communities situated within extremely remote or hard-to-reach areas. Accordingly, another unique and important intervention undertaken by the country has been to establish a network of barefoot doctors – essentially community health workers or healthcare providers who receive basic medical training and serve in rural areas. Although the history of Eritrea's use of barefoot doctors can be traced back decades, in recent years the country, with the firm support of longstanding international development partners, such as UNICEF, has worked to revitalize and expand the positive initiative.

Today, these frontline health

In Eritrea, their appearance dates back to the days of the country's long struggle for independence. Amidst the widespread destruction and great instability of the lengthy conflict, Eritrea's health system was devastated. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which supplanted the Eritrean Liberation Front as the leading independence force in the 1970s, established a remarkably effective health care delivery infrastructure that rendered service to fighters, as well as civilians, in both contested and liberated areas of the country – including in some of the most remote and hard-to-reach regions.

Throughout the protracted war, hundreds of skilled Eritreans, including doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff, fled the towns

building an underground drug production plant that was able to produce dozens of types of medical supplies, including infusions, intravenous fluids, tablets, capsules, syrups, and ointments, the EPLF also established a training and information unit that instructed midwives, paramedics, X-ray technicians, pharmacy assistants, laboratory technicians, dental technicians, and anesthetists.

According to scholars, journalists, and other observers at the time, despite monumental obstacles the EPLF had managed to establish “a primary health care system and civilian hospital service better than those of many already independent African states,” and its successful, cost-effective health system was even regularly spoken about as a “a

## Still vital to providing essential health services

In the years since Eritrea's achievement of independence, barefoot doctors have continued to play an important role in extending health care services for all and leaving no one behind. Today, these frontline health workers provide basic health-related services to Eritrean communities living in the most remote parts of the Gash Barka, Northern Red Sea, and Anseba regions – which are characterized by some of the country's harshest conditions and most difficult terrain. In fact, some of the areas that barefoot doctors serve can only be reached by foot or through the use of camels and donkeys.

Following their nomination by communities and an initial selection process (which ensures that they have met certain criteria), barefoot doctors complete a rigorous training period in primary health facilities lasting six months. (The fact that they are nominated by local communities helps to strengthen trust.) Conducted by Eritrea's Ministry of Health, the residential training period encompasses both theoretical learning and practical, clinical practice.

In addition to learning first aid, barefoot doctors are trained in the identification of certain diseases and treatment or referral to health facilities; mobilizing communities on health, nutrition, and environmental campaigns, including immunization; providing antenatal, postnatal, and neonatal services for pregnant women and newborns; and the treatment of common childhood illnesses. Notably, the training program and subsequent delivery of services are supported by UNICEF, which extends critical backing in the areas of logistics and essential medical equipment and supplies.

Across recent years, more than 100 barefoot doctors have completed training programs and gone on to deliver key services to various communities. Although occasionally overlooked or forgotten, barefoot doctors are playing an important role in Eritrea's overall health-related progress and also helping to ensure that all households and communities in the country, even those located in the most distant areas, have access to quality health services and care.



the country has been to build, renovate, or upgrade hundreds of health facilities. At present, a total of 335 health facilities – comprising hospitals, health centres, health stations, and clinics – are in operation and they have been distributed across the length and breadth of the country. As a result, approximately 80 percent of the population in Eritrea now lives within a 10 km radius of a health facility and 70 percent within a 5 km radius – figures which represent major improvements from just a few decades ago.

Notwithstanding this considerable progress, a variety

workers, showcasing an abundance of commitment and collectively reflecting all the different layers of Eritrea's rich diversity, have helped to promote access to health for all and left an indelible, positive mark on the communities that they diligently serve.

## An integral part of the EPLF's health service

Historically, barefoot doctors have been associated with China. Established in the 1960's, China's barefoot doctors produced major health gains at very low costs and provided everyone affordable access to primary health care.

and joined the EPLF or returned from abroad to support the movement. The EPLF's health policy was guided by two basic principles: health services were to be taken to the “masses” in general and to the workers, peasants, and nomads in particular; and, in light of constraints and various challenges, prevention should take precedence over cure.

Beginning in the early 1970s, the EPLF set up dozens of stationary and mobile clinics, health stations, a number of regional hospitals, and one central hospital in Orotta, complete with operating rooms and laboratories. In addition to

model for rural Africa.”

As an integral part of its unique, integrated approach, the EPLF also trained barefoot doctors, many of whom were actually lay workers or simply civilians, such as mothers, farmers, and young people. Specific areas of training focused on first aid, childbirth assistance, dispensing drugs, and preventative medicine. The EPLF's barefoot doctors not only helped to deliver much-needed first aid and quality care within conflict zones (including for prisoners of war), but also directly responded to the various medical needs of a large segment of the civilian population.

# Lighter Side

## This Week's Weather Forecast: An Unbearably Hot Sun with a Side Dish of Dusty Wind!

Natnael Yebio W.

“What is the sun doing out on an all cooking mission at 8 in the morning, man?!” complains my friend.

“The day has barely started and it is this hot. Imagine what it will be like around noon,” he sighs.

It is, of course, a human tradition to moan about the weather as a conversational gambit. And, like most of us, I can extract a good minute and a half of chatter about the finer nuances of a climate that veers from mildly interesting to interestingly mild – chatter that saves me from revealing the terrifying truth about my social ineptitude, but I’m at a loss when it comes to discussing the heat because everyone else seems to have some sort of an opinion about it, ranging from the downright idiotic to complete

doing so though. I have seen many a hot days during this part of the year in the past but not like this. The heat, the humidity and the dust are unbearable.

According to tradition, walking in the midday sun is not recommended, especially for children. The old folk used to say that the time between noon and two o’clock was when all types of evil spirits stalked unwary victims. If you passed by a heap of garbage or a very dirty spot, you probably got stricken by these evil spirits which left you lying on the ground dead or half-dead. But if the place was open field where the wind blew as it pleased, you were led by some of these thermo-spirits to a far away land where the world as you knew it would be dissolved into nothingness, and you continued walking and walking to infinity

For more ventilation around the armpits, the peasants carry their stick astride their shoulders and let their arms rest on either end parts of the stick. The sweat evaporating from the armpits will create a cooling sensation.

Another way of keeping cool is not to eat foods that have high calories such as milk, butter and fatty meat. Fortunately, just when the hot season starts, it is Lent. And during Lent Orthodox Christians and Catholics abstain from animal foods and dairy products. After eating nothing but vegetables for one week, the sun’s rays and heat will lose their sting. You can now thumb your nose at that fiery ball in the sky.

However, if the weather gets so unbearably hot that house flies commit suicide by nose diving into a hot cup of tea, then either you run for cover under the shade of a tree or find a stream and drink as much as you can without disturbing the cattle.

And should your journey get you across a hot semi-desert where it looks there is more water in your body than in the whole godforsaken region, you are advised to drink entati’e, a mixture of powdered flax seed and water. The oil in the flaxseed will keep your gullet and entrails moistened for long hours.

Peasants who harness or yoke their oxen for a day’s plowing prefer suwa to pure water probably because it is more refreshing and more stimulating.

And then there is the ill wind that blows no good. Sometimes it lifts the dust from the ground and sprays it into your eyes and nostrils. Girls with newly hair-do dread it as if it were the devil, and they list it second to rainfall among natural hazards that threaten their looks.

Of course, peasants welcome the wind during winnowing time on the threshing ground, but they are very much terrorized when it blows with full force in the middle of the rainy season. It means disaster for such a wind comes with a ‘conductor’s baton’ to signal the finale of the grand summer rainfall in mid concerto. Drought and famine follow causing displacement and social



disruption.

In some ways, the wind is also associated with the devil in our tradition. Too much of it and the people think that there is war or some kind of skirmish somewhere. In case the devil feels that he is not getting proper attention, he is believed to come as a wind and waylay people in some corners of the street or even in one’s own backyard and imparts a vigorous slap in the face to cause temporary facial paralysis in the victim. That’s

partly why passengers in the bus shout at you not to roll down the window pane, for heaven’s sake. Nobody likes to have bronchitis or facial paralysis just because some ‘idiot’ wants his day’s share of oxygenated air.

According to some traditionalists, a hot and dusty April means there is rain ahead. A good omen, I assume. You see, according to tradition, it is said that if it rains in April and May it will pour in June and July. Let’s hope it rains, then.



nonsense.

A few years ago, as I strolled along the narrow streets of Asmara in the midday sun, a relative stopped me and remarked that I had to be mad to take a walk in such an ungodly time and suggested that I kept to the shaded part of the sidewalk. I was not convinced.

“I grew up in Asmara,” I explained. “No amount of my country’s chilling cold or scalding heat or roaring wind is going to stop me.”

I know that the highland sun does strain the eyes and can burn the skin with its undiminished supply of ultraviolet rays, but we Eritreans, either by nature or by custom, do not like to carry umbrellas or such to protect ourselves.

I think it is about time we start

like a zombie until some villager with a sixth sense stopped you and took you back home.

This phenomenon is known in Tigrigna as shukushuka, probably a sun-induced hallucination. Strangely enough it doesn’t seem to affect present-day children.

Oh to be young again!  
Urbanization has not only destroyed the environment, but it is also responsible for the extinction of our forest spirits and fairies.

Well, then, how do Eritrean peasants keep cool? This is a good question. The answer lies in the peasant’s garment. One should bear in mind that the majority of our villagers wear white and loose fitting clothes and light thong sandals. The white color reflects the sunrays and the thong sandals keep the feet fresh and odorless.

## NEWS

### VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO YOUTH IN MIHLAB

The National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students organized training on maintenance of water pumps and social science to 73 youth including 21 females in Mihlab administrative area Geleb sub-zone.

Mr. Netsereab Bereketiab, head of the union branch in the sub-zone, said four months training in maintenance of water pumps was provided to 20 youth and one month training on social science to 53 youth.

Indicating that the administrative area is rich in water and soil resource, Mr. Adm Haj, administrator of the administrative area, called on the trainees to apply the training they were provided in the development of vegetables and fruits as well as bee farming and livestock development.

Mr. Azazi Bereketiab, head of the union branch in Anseba region, on his part said that the union is exerting strong effort in the skill and capacity development of the youth with a view to enable them become self supportive and productive members of the society.

The trainees commending for the training opportunity provided expressed readiness to apply the knowledge they gained in improving their livelihoods.

# REPORTAGE

## World Health Day: My Health, My Right

Samuel Habtemichael

The Ministry of Health (MoH) organized an event on April 8 at the premises of Orotta National Referral Hospital to commemorate World Health Day at a national level. The event which was held under the theme “My health, my right” was attended by senior officials from the MoH, representatives from United Nations agencies based in Eritrea, and invited guests. The theme for 2024 was selected by the World Health Organization (WHO) to reassure people across the globe that it is their right to get proper healthcare services and stable living conditions that include economic, political, and social well-being.

In his opening address at the gathering, Mr. Aman Girmatsion, head of training and communication at the MoH, said that the government recognizes health as a fundamental human right and has been working for the past three decades to ensure the provision of healthcare to all citizens as outlined in the sector plan. He reminded participants of the significance of nationally and globally commemorating events such as World Health Day in reinforcing healthcare promotional activities.

In his keynote address, Dr. Andemaryam Tesfatsion, acting director general of Public Health, said that the first National Health Policy that was drafted in November 1991 soon after Eritrea's independence was founded on the basis of the principle of Primary

Health Care.

The policy emanated from the core principles developed and adopted during the armed struggle by the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front), and they reflect the front's aspirations to realize and sustain social justice. The policy framework is based on equitable and extensive coverage of services and opportunities, self-reliance, active engagement of the public, and the involvement of stakeholders from several sectors.

Dr. Andemaryam went on to say that the 1991 policy of Primary Health Care was reaffirmed in the 1994 National Charter of the PFDJ (People's Front for Democracy and Justice), Macro Policy, and other government documents. The MoH revises its policies at regular intervals to meet current national and global requirements and to ensure the provision of quality, equitable, and efficient healthcare services.

Strategies regarding health care that have so far been put to good effect include full government subsidization of the health sector; promotional activities that bring about behavioral change; capacity building programs; infrastructural extension and modernization of healthcare facilities; patient-centered services; monitoring safety, quality, and affordability of medicine and securing domestic demands through Azel Pharmaceutical share company; encouraging utilization of safe and voluntary blood donations; research and evaluation based consistent data gathering and

processing; ensuring readiness to prevent and control epidemics; and consolidating community engagement.

The on-going efforts and initiatives over the years have borne very encouraging results. Today, seventy percent of the Eritrean population now have access to healthcare services within a radius of 5 kilometers while 80 percent can access services within a radius of 10 kilometers. The life expectancy of females and males has increased from 48 years in 1991 to 66 years in 2018. Vaccination against 12 diseases has covered 98 percent of the targeted population, and new infections and deaths caused by communicable diseases is at an all-time low. Healthcare



services to patients suffering from non-communicable diseases have been expanded, and campaigns to eliminate harmful practices, including underage marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), are showing commendable results. And the MoH is poised to announce the eradication of trachoma and

zero mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Underlining that progress is made possible through an enabling environment that includes proper governance, efforts of professionals, conscious participation of the public and the experiences acquired over the years, Dr. Andemaryam concluded his speech by noting that health is and continues to be a fundamental right in Eritrea and by calling on all stakeholders to commit toward that end.

In presenting the message of WHO regional director for Africa, Dr. Nonso Ejiofor, officer-in-charge of WHO in Eritrea, said World Health Day's theme for

Coverage (UHC) by reforming their healthcare policies and revamping legislative and regulatory frameworks, including National Health Insurance Schemes (NHIS) and Social Health Insurance (SHI) schemes to reduce catastrophic out-of-pocket health expenditures. Several countries have started operationalizing an integrated Life Stages Approach, which prioritizes the health of individuals at every stage of their life and the care needed at any time.

Dr. Ejiofor's message made clear that the region still needs help in making quality essential health services accessible to fulfill unfulfilled rights. The challenges member states are facing is further compounded by protracted and ongoing crises such as conflicts, climate change, food insecurity, disease outbreaks, and epidemics. At an estimated 24.3 million in 2021 (3.4 percent of the total population) compared to 15.6 million in 2005, the number of people aged 15 and over that are living with HIV is still high. This reflects the continued transmission of HIV despite reductions in the incidence of people newly infected and the benefits of significantly expanded access to antiretroviral medicine.

Disparities in the coverage of key reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health interventions remain significant, with the rural dweller, the poor, and those in hard-to-reach areas being the most disadvantaged. Furthermore, about eight percent of the population in the African region is still experiencing catastrophic health expenditures.

The message suggests that health is a fundamental human right, and it is central to peace and prosperity. This requires political will and efforts to address health inequities. The needs of vulnerable groups must be assessed and purposively integrated into health programs to accelerate progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The message urges member states to uphold the progress towards fulfilling the right to health that was agreed to by all nations of the world in 1948 and enshrined in the WHO constitution.

World Health Day, which is globally held on 7th April, has been observed in Eritrea for the 28th time and internationally for the 76th time.



2024 reminds member states to assess how far they have gone to meet the region's people's right to have access to healthcare services.

In his message, Dr. Ejiofor acknowledged that member states have made significant progress in ensuring better health outcomes over the past decade. Life expectancy of African women increased from 54 years in 2000 to 67 in 2020, maternal mortality rate decreased by 33 percent (from 788 to 531 maternal deaths per 100,000 lives), and the number of children that die before the age of five from 2000 to 2017 went down by 50 percent. Between 2011 and 2021, the number of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths across Africa decreased by 44 and 55 percent respectively while the death rate caused by tuberculosis decreased by 26 percent. And several diseases, including polio, Guinea worm disease, and maternal and neonatal tetanus, are on the verge of eradication.

Dr. Ejiofor applauded member states' efforts to accelerate progress towards Universal Health



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| Working Experience – Nature & Length            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 10 years’ experience as an Accountant, reconciliation, control and reporting experience. Mining experience will have an asset.</li> </ul>  |
| Leadership Experience – Nature & length of time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time management skill, ethical and professional attitude</li> <li>• Excellent leadership experience.</li> </ul>  |
| Other skills and abilities                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely detail-oriented, proactive, and Accounting, Corporate Finance, Reporting Skills, Deadline-Oriented, Reporting Research Results, Confidentiality, Time Management, Data Entry Management. Good math and computer skills. High-level of attention to detail. Skills of accounting software applications. Strong organizational skills. Independent work skills. Analytical and problem solving skills. Strongly detail-oriented. Computer skills, especially the ability to use accounting software. Written and verbal communication skills.</li> </ul> |

**General Information and other requirements:**

- Place of Work:** Asmara Office & AMSC Sites
- Type of contract:** Indefinite Period
- Salary:** As per the Company salary scale

**Additional requirements for Nationals:**

- Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from the Ministry of Defense.
  - Present clearance paper from current/last employer.
  - Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card, etc.).
  - Only shortlisted applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
  - Application documents will not be returned to the sender.
  - All applications should be sent through the post office.
  - Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.
- Address: Please mail your applications to;**  
**Asmara Mining Share Company,**  
**P. O. Box 10688 Asmara, Eritrea**
  - Mineral Resources Management**  
**P.O. Box 272**  
**Asmara**
  - Note to Eritrean applicants:**  
**Please send a copy of your application to**  
**Aliens Employment Permit Affairs,**  
**P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea**

## Letter of Invitation for Bids Ministry of Agriculture

1. The State of Eritrea, Ministry of Agriculture, and National Project Coordination Office (NPCO) has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of Integrated Agricultural Development Project (IADP) and intends to apply part of the financing for the purchase of these goods. The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD's approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD's rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with Integrated Agricultural Development Project (IADP).

2. The Integrated Agricultural Development Project (IADP) includes three components and has six years' lifetime from June 2022. The overall goal of the project is to contribute to poverty reduction and food and nutrition security of rural households. The project Development objective is to enhance small holder agricultural production and productivity in sustainable way and improves rural livelihoods.

3. This IFB follows the general procurement notice that appeared on the IFAD website on *31 January, 2024*, the **United Nations Development Business (UNDB) web site on 31 January, 2024** and a national newspaper *Haddas Eritrea/ Eritrean profile on 2 March, 2024*.

4. The purchaser now invites sealed bids from eligible entities ("bidders") for the **provision of assorted tools in 2 lots, Procurement of pesticide for migratory pest (Fenthion 96%ULV and Cypermethrine 25%EC), Procurement of total station, Procurement of sprayer and PPE and Procurement of Epoxy**. More details on these goods and related services are provided in the schedule of requirements in this bidding document.

5. This IFB is open to all eligible bidders who wish to respond. Subject to the restrictions noted in the bidding document, eligible entities may associate with other bidders to enhance their capacity to successfully deliver the goods and related services. Potential bidders should first request for a registration form using email address below. Upon filling the form, Potential bidders should be return through a reply email and set of the bidding document will be provide immediately thereafter at no charge.

6. Bidding will be conducted using the International Competitive Bidding (ICB) method, the evaluation procedure for which is described in this bidding document, in accordance with the IFAD procurement handbook, which is provided on the IFAD website [www.ifad.org/project-procurement](http://www.ifad.org/project-procurement). The ICB process, as described, will include a review and verification of qualifications and past performance, including a reference check, prior to the contract award.

7. Please note that a pre-bid conference will not be held as described in the bid data sheet BDS, Section II of the bidding document.

8. Bids must be delivered to the address below and in the manner specified in the BDS ITB 25 no later than **9:30 am local Asmara, Eritrea's time, 28 May 2024**.

Ministry of Agriculture, Procurement and Supplies Management Division (PSMD)

Lidia Russom (Procurement officer)  
Sawa Street, Asmara, Eritrea  
Lidyarusomlidu1221@gmail.com  
Tel Number: 00291181076/00291189266  
Fax Number: 1048

9. Bidders should be aware that late bids will not be accepted under any circumstances and will be returned unopened to the bidder. All bids must be accompanied by a bid securing deceleration.

10. Please note that electronic bids shall not be accepted as defined in ITB BDS 25.



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

Tel: (+291) 1124941  
Fax: (+291) 1124941  
www.bishamining.com

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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

**Position: Accounts Payable Officer**

**Department: FITS/Finance**

**Number required: One (01)**

### Primary Purpose

- Receive, check, and process invoices and prepare and follow up payments to suppliers, preparing vendor account reconciliations and managing cash flow requirements, including communicating and providing feedback with suppliers for queries.

### Essential Functions

- Creating, maintaining, and updating vendor registration.
- Processing Invoices and preparing payment to vendor.
- Preparing daily, weekly, monthly vendor balance for review.
- Preparing vendor account and bank reconciliations.
- Indexing, archiving, and retrieving all supplier related documents.

### Main function

- Creating, maintaining and updating vendor registration.
- Processing invoices.
- Reconciliations.
- Reporting.
- Administration.

### Qualifications:

- Certificate in commercial school or
- Certificate in accounting
- Diploma in accounting will be an advantage

### Knowledge and Experience:

- 3-5 Years general knowledge in accounting and 3 years Accounting related software is an advantage.

### Technical Skills

Computer Literacy (MS Office – Intermediate, Excel – Advanced)

Attention to detail and accounting knowledge

Compliance to accounting standards

Numeracy skills and reporting skills

Candidate must be physically and medically fit

### Behavioural Skills

Interpersonal Skill

Communication  
(English and local language)

Ability to meet deadlines

Accuracy,

Confidentiality

### General Information and other requirements:

- **Salary:** As per Company salary scale.
- **Type of Contract:** Indefinite
- **Place of work:** Bisha
- **Additional requirements for Nationals:**
  - Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from the Ministry of Defense.
  - Present clearance paper from current/last employer.
  - Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card etc.).
  - Only shortlisted applicants will be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
  - Application documents will not be returned to sender.
  - All applications should be sent through the post office.
  - **Deadline for application: 10 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.**
- **Address: Please mail your applications to:**  
Bisha Mining Share Company,  
P. O. Box 4276  
Asmara, Eritrea
- **Note to Non-Eritrean applicants:**  
Please send a copy of your application to  
1. Aliens Employment permits Affairs,  
P. O. Box 7940  
Asmara, Eritrea.  
2. Mineral Resources Management  
P. O. Box 272  
Asmara, Eritrea



Q and A

# Ambition Gets you Started; Consistency Keeps you Going!

Sabrina Solomon

We're happy to have you here, Vickram. Let's begin with a brief introduction of yourself to our readers.

*Meet Vickram Khalid, a career-driven young Eritrean who specializes in wedding photography and has supplemented his experience with brief photography courses. Vickram was one of the first photographers in Eritrea to use social media to promote his works. Known for his uniquely artistic and creative photos, he has covered over 550 wedding ceremonies. Following is a brief interview about his journey.*

Thank you for having me. I was born and raised in Asmara. I attended my college education at the Eritrean Institute of Technology (EIT) in

Although I was in between hobbies at the time, the things

beginning of a new chapter in life, which made me focus on fine art wedding photography. To date, I have covered around 556 weddings and other similar events. Currently, I operate in three countries, Asmara being my base, Kampala my second branch, and Addis Ababa my third branch. We have organized ourselves under Vicki Fine Arts Photography with around 19 professional crew members, a combination of photographers, videographers, editors, visual effects designers, sound engineers, and so on. We now offer a worldwide destination-based service. So far, we have held events in seven countries.

**What do you think is the way to success in achieving your goals?**

The first and most important thing is an unyielding desire for success. From my experience, it can be a challenging journey to maintain. There are always challenges that you need to figure out, and those



challenges come without warning. Your desire and ambition could serve



Mai-Nefhi and started majoring in chemistry, but unfortunately, I couldn't complete my college education because of some personal matters. Afterward, I studied computer science at the SMAP educational institute and graduated in 2011. Throughout the years, I have been in between hobbies that eventually narrowed down to fine arts photography while specializing in wedding photography. I have been doing photography for over 12 years now.

**What ignited your passion for camera lenses, Vickram?**

I grew fond of cameras at such a young age. Ever since I was a child, I have used the camera as a medium for my interpretation of my hobbies and works. This is because I first started in fine arts, specifically in drawings and paintings. The one thing that was in between this fine arts was the camera. I began using a camera as a medium to capture moments and paint them later. Back in the day, we had huge 33-millimeter cameras with enormous lenses, and they were a burden to carry due to their sheer size. But I have still been using it for a long time.

I wanted to do the most were interconnected; they shared a common interest in expressing myself and capturing moments through lenses. Eventually, my camera became my medium for interpreting my thoughts, becoming essential to my work.

I have taken various photography training courses over the years, including online courses from the University of Hawkins in 2014 and another online class in 2017 from Professor Ian Heidfeld, a renowned Russian professor on mastery of fine-art photography. The training took around nine months each and helped me diversify my understanding of photography and better understand fine-art photography. There was also a photography competition in 2014 from the United Wedding Photographers (UWPS) association based in London, and it won second place.

**Why fine arts wedding photography?**

It's where raw emotions come out. What can be better than capturing those moments of infinite emotions? It's a storytelling of the



you as fuel to scale the obstacles. Ambition gets you started, and consistency gets you going. Nothing comes overnight; therefore, once you buckle up, regardless of the misfortunes that might come your way, you should tighten your grip until you reach your destination. Initiation isn't the most challenging part, but consistency is. As long as you're consistent, you will advance. Now, the goal is simple for me: be better than yesterday. That comes with relentless work and the required discipline to keep you going.

You're not competing with anyone else but myself. Being better than yesterday and being the best version of yourself is the most outstanding achievement in the journey to success.

**What can we, as Eritreans, benefit from the growing number of artists in our country?**

A lot. First and foremost, art and photography are about documenting events in every aspect of life and the history of a nation. They are reliable means of storytelling. We can do a lot through art in connecting and relating the story of our people and country with the rest of the world now that we can use social media platforms as our medium. Art can be a means of sharing our country's beautiful culture, tradition, and history. The interaction between cultures and traditions between

different countries and ethnicities through art creates stronger bonds and attachments. If you are active on social media, then use them as a platform to share your works with your fans.

How's that experience for you? When social media became popular a few years ago, I decided to use it to share my work with the world. Currently, I have around 10,000 followers on Instagram @vickydeziigns, and I'm active on almost all the other social media platforms.

**What is next for you?**

I want to capture an outstanding image to give my country and myself a more prominent name in art. To just come up with masterpiece works and reach that level. That is the ultimate goal for me.

The thing with art is that it requires a disciplined thought and spirit. We Eritrean artists strive to express our profound opinions, thoughts, and ideas through a disciplined work ethic. There's progress and continuous improvement in art in our country, whether in filmmaking, writing, or every other artistic work. In the past 30 years, we have been making impressive progress. But we still have a long way to go. And the best is yet to come!

**Thank you, Vickram!**