

London UK 16th September 2012

Thousands of people had the opportunity to celebrate and participate in this fabulous annual 12th Eritrean Festival 2012 - London UK.

The colourful Eritrean Festival in UK, which took place in London, from the 15th until 16th September 2012 at Lee Valley, Edmonton, a magnificent tent arena, that would house the busloads that came from Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Scotland, Liverpool, Sheffield, London.

Festival Eritrea UK 2012 was officially opened by Mr. Abdella Jaber Head of the Organizational Affairs at the PFDJ (Peoples Front for Democracy & Justice).

The opening ceremony was also attended by Eritrean Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to the United Kingdom and Ireland H.E. Tesfamichael Gerahtu, Embassy officials, Heads of various Eritrean committees in the UK, Community Elders and Religious leaders.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the chairman of Eritrean Community Campaign Committee, Mr Ahmed Mohammed, stressed the paramount importance of holding festivals in bringing Eritrean nationals together. It also has a vital role to play in reinforcing identity and bequeathing cherished societal values to future generations, he added.

The Eritrean Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to the UK & Ireland H.E. Tesfamichael Gerahtu also gave a welcoming speech, thanking the participants in taking part on the celebration of the 12th Eritrean Festival UK, there by updating the participants on current state of affairs.

Amongst the highs of the opening ceremony were the cultural performances by the traditional children & youth cultural group, which captivated the audience from each corner of the festival ground. Each and every face was filled with pride whilst the cultural group displayed a performance that was original overpowering the host culture.

An exhibition that depicts the Eritrean culture and current developments in Eritrea was also opened for the public by the guest of honour. The exhibition also included paintings, photos and craft works from the diverse Eritrean culture and rich history, which depicted the exceptional history of the Liberation struggle in Eritrea.

In a seminar he conducted with the participants of the festival Mr. Abdella Jaber Head of the Organizational Affairs at the PFDJ (Peoples Front for Democracy & Justice), explained that the Eritrean government is making enormous investment with major focus on the ruralarea with a view to ensuring social justice and sustainable economic development, and that increased endeavors would be exerted to give added momentum to the nation's development process. He further pointed out that the country is in a stage where its bright future is becoming progressively evident thanks to the spirit of steadfastness among citizens inside the country and abroad in foiling anti-Eritrean agendas.

The Festival was organized across seven programs, which were children's activities, family & community activities, arts & culture program, youth forums & ideas, sports competition. Thus, the main thrust of the program was focus on the activities of children, youth, families and communities in general.

The above efforts have been very instrumental in consolidating national unity, national mobilization and organization, cultural transformation and the transfer of the values as cultural heritage to the next generation has thus been crucial in the independence of the nation.

The 12th London Eritrean Festival was an important occasion for harmony, consolidation of Eritrean unity, strengthen the Eritrean culture and identity, promoting higher mobilization and organization, developing Eritrean capacity and ingenuity and finally for recreation and entertainment of Eritreans.

Another unforgettable moment of the event was the music performance from the cultural group; Eritrean artists that reside in the UK sent the crowd wild which witnessed the high level of patriotism with a wave of the colourful Eritrean flag dominating the sight of every participant.

The lowering of the flag became the last event to seal the night and it was a spectacular event.

The Ambassador gave his closing speech, and after the flag was lowered the crowd processed to get on with their final dance known as the "Guyla Hafash" (Traditional Eritrean dance by all participants) on the field that left the crowd wowed and asking for more.

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