

Media

Modern media was introduced in Eritrea more than a century and half years ago. It was first introduced by the European missionaries in 1866. It continued until the time of the illegal annexation of Eritrea with Ethiopia where the Eritrea media infrastructure lay in ruins. Now, Eritrean media is one of the most developed media in Africa that can be viewed and heard globally.

The media is comprised of Printing Press, various Radio Channels, two TV channels and online webpage. Eri-TV and the two Radio Channels (the Dimtsi Hafash, and Radio Zara) cover almost every corner of the country, and are broadcasted with three satellites to cover most part of Europe (western and Eastern), Middle East and Far East, North America, Australia and some parts of Asia. The Channel II and the Radio Sawa local media with various target audiences.

The first Eritrean newspapers appeared post World War II in 1947 during the British colonization era. These publications were abruptly curtailed by Ethiopian authorities shortly after the imposition of the UN-sponsored Federation in 1952. Nationalist media did not reappear until the start of armed resistance in the 1960s and 1970s. By the early 1980s, the EPLF was producing daily radio broadcasts in six languages and an average of eight periodicals and nine film documentaries each year. By the end of the liberation war, the EPLF crews had produced sixty-four films depicting the armed struggle, the condition of war prisoners and political rallies, as well as public health work, traditional songs and dances, and many other social and cultural themes.

Eritrea's main objectives in this field are to: develop free, responsible and credible mass media: to promote the democratization process and strengthen national unity: to provide the public with news and timely information, as well as entertainment and enlightenment: to enhance cultural values and traditions: to enhance public debate and discussion.

The Press: The Ministry of Information publishes three newspapers: the Tigrinya Hadas Eritrea, with a circulation that reaches as high as 60,000: the Arabic Eritrea Alhadisa, with a circulation in excess of 5,000, and the English-language twice a week Eritrea Profile, with a circulation about 5,000.

There are also Private magazines and periodicals aimed at specialized audiences also appear at irregular interval, as do publications from regional administrations, charitable groups and others.

Radio:

Dimtsi Hafash (Voice of the Broad Masses), is a state owned media that broadcasts from the

capital Asmara. This national radio service begun under the liberation front in 1979. The high illiteracy rate among Eritreans, particularly in rural areas, make this medium the most effective to educate and inform the general public. Its correspondents are stationed throughout the country. With a transmission power of 100 kilowatts, Dimtsi Hafash covers all Eritrea and it also available via satellite. It broadcasts in nine Eritrean ethnic languages, (Tigrinya, Arabic, Tigre, Kunama, Saho, Afar, Bilen, Hedareb and Nara), Amharic, Oromo and Somali languages and covers a wide range of subjects targeted at general and specific audiences. Children and youth, for example, broadcast their own shows each week.

Radio Zara: This is an FM channel in Eritrea, located in Asmara, with almost all of its programs is composed of music. It plays a significant role in preserving the cultural and social aspects of music and also serves as an outlook to other cultures and international popular songs around the world. It is also a source of income from advertisements. Radio Zara is also available via satellite.

Radio Sawa: This is also an FM channel, located in Sawa, which extends its coverage in the south western part of Eritrea. It provides various entertainment and educational programs to their target audiences which are mostly the students in Warsay Ykealo Secondary School.

Television:

There are two state owned TV channels in Eritrea. Eri-TV channel began broadcasting from Asmara in 1993 with a one kilowatt transmitter that barely covered the capital city. Later it started to broadcast with five kilowatt transmitter to cover a wider range. However seeing the importance and the role it can play in this information age it is broadcasting with a ten kilowatt signal and goes through three satellites to cover every corner of the country as well as most parts of the world. The Eri-TV also has a mobile studio that can broadcast from any part of the world to its audience inside or outside of Eritrea. The programs in Eri-TV is broadcasted in six languages (Tigrinya, Tigre, Arabic, Amharic, Oromo and English) with specialized desks for news and current affairs, politics and development, entertainment and sports and culture and the arts. Educational programs range from public health issues, innovative agricultural practices and environmental issues to household economy and the special needs of children. It broadcasts 24 hours everyday.

The Channel II: (A local channel) is also state owned TV channel that covers all corners in Eritrea. Its main goal is for educational purposes and also provides entertainment programs such as sports and music. It broadcasts for seven hours mostly educational programs.

ERINA: The government-operated Eritrean New Agency collects local, regional and international news and information and distributes it to the newspapers, the radio and the television. Its correspondents are spread throughout the 30 sub zones in Eritrea providing detailed and up-to-date news and information for broadcast. The correspondents communicate with the head office through fax, telephone, two-way radio and computerized radio transmission.

Eritrea At A Glance VI

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With the growth of the internet facilities the communication has been digitalized and speeded up.