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Asmara, 15 May 2010- Following extensive preparations, the 19th Independence Anniversary celebration began here in Asmara with colorful cultural and sports activities. Accordingly, programs including cultural shows and seminars were carried out in different schools yesterday.

The new program where commemorative events will be held in 161 schools of the Central region from 14-23 May, is expected to play major role in enlightening students as to the struggle and sacrifices made for freedom and enabling them to experience the true meaning of Independence Day.

Meanwhile, in the early morning hours today, a race was held among students, parents, veteran sportsmen and army officials. "The vibrant celebration of our independence day strengthens our unity and sends out a clear message to our enemies," one of the veteran sportsmen pointed out.

Reports indicate that similar races were held today in the towns of Keren, Adi Keih and Dekemhare.

Different cultural shows that include, 'one man show', karaoke as well as special talent presentations will be staged in the evening hours today.