

Europe External Programme with Africa

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA

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Situation in Tigray (per 24 August)

- Reuters confirmed that fighting has started between the Tigray defence forces (TDF) and Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) along the Southern border of the Tigray regional state.
- Residents along the border told Reuters that they heard heavy weapons since the early morning of 24 August and there had been movement of Ethiopian soldiers, Amhara special forces and volunteer Fano militia in the past two days.
- As of yet, it remains unclear who instigated the hostilities. Both sides are accusing each other. No independent verification has taken place.
- A statement from the military command of the Tigray army accused the ENDF and regional militias of launching a large-scale attack in southern Tigray, thus violating the ceasefire. The attack started at approximately 5 am local time, today.
- The statement by the TDF states that extensive offensive operations occurred at Chobe Ber, Janora, Gubagala, Yalow, Alamata, Bala, and Biso Ber. Reportedly, the 6th and 8th infantry commands of the ENDF, including the 2nd, 6th, and 8th mechanised divisions, started the offensive operations.
- The ENDF issued a statement yesterday that people and media should stop circulating "negative reports of our army's current situation with unconfirmed, unconfirmed information and rumours".
- The ENDF has since added that it is at "readiness levels" to repel outside attacks.
- The Federal Government Communication Service of Ethiopia later confirmed the resumption of fighting between Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) and federal government forces today.
- The federal government has accused TDF of starting the military hostilities. It accused "TPLF" of launching an attack in the morning and said that Tigray had broken the ceasefire.
- The President of the regional government of Tigray, Debretsion, wrote yesterday laying out his concerns with the peace process. He argued that the current process was being "laid out to fail".
- Debretsion listed conditions required for successful peace negotiations and accused Eritrea and the Ethiopian government of "beating the drums of war". According to the letter, two secret rounds of negotiations between Ethiopia and Tigray had taken place.

Situation in Eritrea (per 24 August)

- In the first weeks of August there were massive round ups and raids in the Eritrean Segeneyti area Southern region (Dehub). People were ordered back to their posts in Irob areas.
 - Violent raids were conducted to find school dropouts and others, who have not reported to military service. When the military did not find the people they were looking for, family members were evicted from their homes and arrested. The regime also confiscated a large number of cattle. Presently there are reports of similar raids in the Keren area.
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- In Segeneyti the raids were conducted by Assab - Afar troops, and the force used was described as reminiscent of the worst of the Haile Selassie and Dergue period. Raids in Segeneyti included not only house-to-house searches, but mosques and churches were raided - even during services.
- Concerning the raids and roundups people reported that there was no mobile connection in the Segeneyti area during the last two months.
- Also the restriction of movement prevents people from sharing information or moving their property. The regime has confiscated property from the places they raided and sealed.
- Anybody (including women and children) moving in or out of the area, is searched thoroughly.

International Situation (per 24 August)

- The Eritrean People's Front for Democracy and Justice, PFDJ organised a 'cultural' event on 13 August in Rijswijk, the Netherlands, for the diaspora.
- Members of the Eritrean community reported that the 'cultural' events organised by the Government of Eritrea help monitor who is loyal to the regime.
- The festival had artist Awel Seid on the ticket, who is perceived by Eritrean human rights defenders as perpetuating hate-speech against Tigrayans. They asked for the event to be prohibited.
- The Eritrean organisers appealed the decision of Rijswijk municipality to cancel the event in court. The organisers lost the appeal. The event was cancelled. A replacement event was also prohibited.
- An Eritrean festival in Germany on 20 August was not cancelled after being challenged in court, but was stopped by police after heavy fighting between opposite groups during the preparations.
- After these cancellations, serious threats were issued by spokespersons of the Eritrean government to those opposing the festivals, including threats to punish family members.
- Festivals still planned in Norway and Switzerland are being contested by Eritrea and Tigray groups.
- The events organiser of the Eritrean regime, Sirak Bahlbi, was seen encouraging the diaspora to fundraise activities at the festivals to support the ongoing war in Tigray, in a leaked zoom meeting.
- Insecurity on the outcome of the elections in Kenya - after results are being challenged in Court, form a backdrop for the resumption of the fighting in Ethiopia, say observers. Kenya was trusted by the Tigray regional government as a peace mediator.

Links of interest

[Fighting erupts along border of Ethiopia's northern Tigray region- residents, Tigray forces spokesman](#)
[Federal government and Tigrayan forces exchange blame for resumption of military hostilities](#)
[Ethiopia Army issues warning calling for immediate stop to "unverified, unnecessary information](#)
[News: Army at level of readiness "to repel any attack from inside, outside": ENDF](#)
[Twitter: Statement from Tigray Army's Military Command](#)
[Open Letter from the President of the Government of the National Regional State of Tigray](#)
[Letter from the Foundation Human Rights for Eritrean](#)
[Event by the Eritrean \(Young\) People's Front for Democracy and Justice glorifying violence and hatred](#)
[BREAKING: Dutch court rejects appeal against ban on PFDJ Festival this weekend](#)
[Leaked zoom meeting of the regime's Charge d'Affairs, Mr. Sirak Bahlbi](#)
[German PFDJ festival called off after protests and clashes](#)
<https://eritreahub.org/furious-at-challenges-to-its-control-over-the-diaspora-the-eritrean-regime-threat-ens-families-back-home>

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