

SITUATION REPORT - HORN OF AFRICA & NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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Situation in Sudan (per 5 March)

- The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) seized control of key sections of the Dilling–Kadugli and Dilling–Habla roads, South Kordofan, after several days of fighting with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), cutting humanitarian and military supply routes to the towns of Dilling and Kadugli.
- At least five civilians were killed and 33 injured when artillery shelling by forces allied with the RSF and the SPLM-North struck residential neighborhoods in Dilling, South Kordofan, as the groups attempted to re-impose a blockade on key towns.
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, operated by the World Food Programme (WFP), resumed humanitarian flights to Khartoum after nearly three years, enabling aid workers and supplies to reach conflict-affected areas and improve access for humanitarian operations across Sudan.
- The Blue Nile region has been facing severe military escalation between December 2025 and February 2026, resulting in over 180 fatalities and displacing more than 25,000 people, states a new report by the Insights Sudan Data Programme.
- Systematic drone strikes on power stations, hospitals and flour mills have paralyzed basic services and threatened long-term food security, states the report, adding that the region now records the highest cost of living in Sudan.
- The report further highlighted the increase of violations in contact zones and an increase in arbitrary detentions under the recurring state of emergency.

Situation in Ethiopia/Eritrea (per 5 March)

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) urged the federal government and Oromia regional authorities to take urgent action to stop killings, displacement, and property destruction in the Arsi Zone of Oromia after renewed attacks left up to 30 civilians dead since late February and deepened an ongoing cycle of violence linked to insecurity and armed group activity.
- Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed stated that Ethiopia has no intention of invading neighboring countries while reiterating his government's demand for access to a seaport, as rising tensions with Eritrea and other regional states intensify over Ethiopia's push to regain maritime access to the Red Sea.
- In a separate interview with the state-run Ethiopian News Agency, PM Abiy Ahmed, however, warned that Ethiopia would not tolerate further attempts by the Eritrean government to destabilize Ethiopia, stating that any renewed effort by Asmara "will be the last".
- Fuel shortages and rising prices across Ethiopia, particularly Addis Ababa, Mekelle, Jimma, Ambo, and Bahir Dar, have forced drivers to queue for hours as supply constraints and global oil market tensions disrupt transport and daily economic activity in early March.

International and regional situation (per 5 March)

- Ethiopia was accused by Sudan's provisional government of involvement in drone strikes launched from Ethiopian territory targeting various sites in Sudan in February and March. The statement issued by the Sudanese foreign ministry does not specify details of attacks nor which locations have been hit.

- Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry, in response, summoned Sudan's ambassador to Addis Ababa to reject Khartoum's accusations that drone strikes in Sudan were launched from Ethiopian territory.
- The death toll in an attack on South Sudan's Ruweng Administrative Area rose to at least 178 people. The attack was carried out by a group of unidentified men on Sunday.
- Worsening conflict, climate shocks, and food insecurity are driving a global surge in child malnutrition, with nearly eight million children affected, particularly in crisis zones such as Sudan, Yemen, and Gaza where humanitarian access and food supplies remain severely limited, warns UNICEF.
- In its 2026 annual report, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended that the US State Department designate Sudan's RSF as an "entity of particular concern" due to documented systematic violations of religious freedom during, including attacks on places of worship, arbitrary detentions, and the targeting of religious minorities in areas under RSF control.
- Somalia's federal parliament approved a new constitution introducing direct public elections of lawmakers, replacing the clan-based selection system. The reforms were passed amid an opposition boycott and concerns over security and logistical challenges.
- Four children were killed and six others injured in an explosion in the Dhikil region of southern Djibouti's Afar area in early March 2026, which authorities described as a tragic blast under investigation.
- The human rights organization Djiboutian League for Human Rights states the attack was part of a series of drone strikes targeting nomadic communities near the Ethiopian border.

Refugee and Migration Situation (per 5 March)

- Egyptian authorities increased arbitrary detentions and illegal deportations of refugees, particularly Sudanese nationals, forcing many into hiding, states a report by Amnesty International.
- The report states that police have been carrying out round-ups often disregarding the status of refugees registered under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with many people being deported despite legal orders for their release.
- Sudanese authorities confirmed that a second voluntary repatriation flight will transport about 80 Sudanese refugees from Entebbe, Uganda, to Port Sudan, as part of a broader government plan to return approximately 10,000 Sudanese refugees who fled the country during the ongoing civil war.
- 112 migrants and refugees, including at least 39 Sudanese nationals, were rescued off Libya's western coast after being stranded in the Mediterranean Sea for more than 24 hours while attempting to reach Europe, reports the UNHCR.
- Kenyan police rescued 70 foreign nationals, including 66 Ethiopians and four Eritreans, from a suspected human trafficking operation in a residential house in the Ruai area of Nairobi during a raid conducted by detectives from the Transnational Organised Crime Unit.

Links of interest

- [RSF Cuts South Kordofan Relief Routes After Heavy Fighting](#)
- [First UN WFP flight in three years lands in Sudan capital Khartoum](#)
- [Five killed in artillery strike on Sudan's Dilling](#)
- [Abiy Ahmed insists Ethiopia will not go to war over sea access](#)
- [Ethiopia Rights Commission urges urgent federal, Oromia action after dozens killed in renewed attacks in Oromia region](#)
- [PM Abiy issues stern warning to Eritrea, says further attempt to harm Ethiopia "will be the last"](#)
- [Fuel shortages deepen in Addis Abeba, regional cities as drivers endure prolonged queues](#)
- [Sudan government says drone attacks came 'from Ethiopian territory'](#)
- [Ethiopia summons Sudan ambassador over drone attack allegations](#)
- [UNICEF launches humanitarian campaign to save severely malnourished children in Sudan, Yemen and Gaza](#)
- [USCIRF urges designation of Sudan's RSF as religious freedom violator](#)
- [Somalia's new constitution will see directly elected lawmakers](#)
- [Four Children killed in Djibouti 'drone strike' explosion: official, NGO](#)
- [Death toll in 'surprise' attack in South Sudan rises to 178, local official says](#)
- [Refugees forced to hide in Egypt to avoid arrests and deportation, Amnesty reports](#)
- [Sudan to repatriate 10,000 refugees from Uganda in voluntary return program](#)
- [39 Sudanese among 112 migrants rescued off Libya coast](#)
- [66 Ethiopians, 4 Eritreans rescued from suspected human trafficking ring in Ruai, Nairobi](#)

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