

## Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 109 - 23 March 2021

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### Reported War Situation in Tigray (as per 22 March)

- Fierce fighting between Eritrean soldiers and Tigray forces in Hintalo-district has continued today.
- Reported that infantry divisions of 21<sup>st</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, 53<sup>rd</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> as well as 49<sup>th</sup> mechanized and 524<sup>th</sup> motorized divisions of the Eritrean army are participating in the in South-eastern front in Tigray.
- Commanders of the 49<sup>th</sup>, 524<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> mechanized, motorized and infantry divisions of Eritrean forces have been reportedly killed in the fight against Tigray forces.
- In the previous EEPA report we mistakenly identified the 17 vehicles that were ambushed and destroyed as part of the 29th division. It is in fact the 27th.
- Tigrai Media House (TMH) reported that a battalion of Amhara forces have been reportedly destroyed in Tsata town, Waghimra Zone, inside Amhara regional state.
- The Catholics of Tigray have written a letter to Pope Francis about the involvement of Cardinal Berhaneyesus Sourafel in the Tigray crisis.
- The Addis Standard report says an unknown number of people have been killed in ongoing violence in Oromia special zone and Northern Shewa zone, Amhara regional state.
- According to the report, the conflict was first reported on March 19, 2021 and the violence saw the burning down of religious institutions.
- North Shewa Zone, Peace and Security burera head, Abera Mokenen said: "A mosque and a church have been burned down in Ataye town as a result of the violence and investigations are ongoing."
- Sisay Damte, the head of Peace and Security of the Amhara regional state explained that the violence broke out after the shooting of an individual and he didn't specify the nature of the attack, but went on saying the attack was carried out by an unspecified armed group.
- However, Hassen Hadiya, a resident of Kemise who spoke to Addis Standard says the violence started after Amhara Special police shot an individual in front of the grand mosque in Ataye after night prayers.
- According to Kush Media Network (KMN), Eritrean troops have been allegedly involved in the ongoing conflict in Oromia Special Zone. The Identification card of an Eritrean soldier who was reportedly killed in the fight was found and posted.
- The OLF has announced that Batte Urgessa, OLF's PR bureau head and his driver Wondosen Abdulkadir were arrested by Burayu police, Oromia Regional State. Batte was arrested while visiting colleagues detained at Burayu police station.
- Addis Ababa Police says anti-peace forces are disseminating unfounded information alleging an impending inter-ethnic and inter-religious attacks on residents of the city.
- The OLF claims that Amhara militias are attacking civilians in the Amhara Regional State and Oromia Special Administrative Zone.
- Tigray Interim Administration head, Mulu Nega, said the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Tigray has reached more than 900,000 and most of them are from western Tigray. This is a decrease

from previous reports from early January, when the Interim Administration estimated the number of IDPs at 2.2 million or more. (Situation report 46).

- In a new OCHA report published on Monday, the organisation said that 12 healthcare facilities were looted by “armed actors” in the two weeks preceding March 12th.
- They further say that there continues to be acute levels of malnutrition across Tigray.
- OCHA also says that the number of displaced people is still rising. They estimate that a thousand people are arriving in Shire every day. Most of those arriving are fleeing from Western Tigray. Another 107 thousand have arrived in Adwa since the start of the conflict.
- The influx of refugees from Western Tigray is overwhelming the healthcare capacity in the rest of the region.
- At least a 140 thousand have been displaced from Western Tigray. Their partners are indicating that “several major towns are now empty of Tigrayan people, with new residents occupying vacated houses.” Access to the region is only possible through Amhara.
- It estimates that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is high, with at least 516 self-reported case of rape as of March 12th.
- The presence of Ethiopian troops is posing “huge challenges in the health response.” Abi Adi hospital, just West of Mekelle, has been occupied by Eritrean troops after being vacated by the ENDF.
- 1.3 million children need services and education.

#### Reported international situation (as per 22 March)

- The European Union has imposed sanctions on the Eritrean Head of the National Security Office Abraha Kassa. The NSO is responsible for serious Human Rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, forced labour and torture.
- Eritrea’s Ministry of Information said it rejects the offensive and counterproductive resolution adopted by the EU Council of Ministers against it.
- The statement by the Ministry of Information says the EU has no legal or moral prerogative for its decision and has merely invoked trumped-up charges to harass Eritrea for other ulterior motives.
- FP says the Biden Administration is expected to tap a former U.N official to be the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, a new role aimed at tackling the crisis in Ethiopia and instability in the broader region.
- Jeffrey Feltman, the former top political advisor to the U.N. SG, has been offered the newly created post, according to several people familiar with the matter, though they cautioned that the appointment has not been finalized.
- Finland’s Foreign Minister, Pekka Haavisto said: “I am ready to continue outreach and travel to Ethiopia and the region within a few weeks with renewed EU mandate. It is important to continue dialogue on cessation of hostilities, unhindered humanitarian access and human rights investigations.”

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#### Links of interest

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/22/biden-africa-jeffrey-feltman-ethiopia-tigray-east-africa-gerd/>

<https://www.msf.org/ethiopia-tigray-crisis-update>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-tigray-region-humanitarian-update-situation-report-22-march-2021>

<https://dailynewsegyp.com/2021/03/22/sudan-calls-on-ethiopia-to-accept-quartet-mediation-on-blue-nile-dam/>

[https://m.jpost.com/breaking-news/eu-slaps-sanctions-on-eritrea-over-human-rights-abuses-662826/amp?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://m.jpost.com/breaking-news/eu-slaps-sanctions-on-eritrea-over-human-rights-abuses-662826/amp?_twitter_impression=true)