

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 118 - 02 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Sexual and human rights violation in Tigray (as per 01 April)

- New York Times (NYT) report says rape is being used as a weapon as fighting rages in remote parts of the Tigray region. It is one of the many accounts that they have heard.
- NYT report said that they spoke to Mona Lisa, an 18-year-old high school graduate who survived an attempted rape that left her with seven gunshot wounds and an amputated arm.
- An Ethiopian soldier burst into her house in Abiy Addi, Central Tigray. They then ordered her and her Grandfather to have sex. The grandfather refused and was shot in the leg. The soldier then tried to rape her. She however resisted and was shot multiple times.
- She wanted it to be known that she had resisted. "This is ethnic cleansing," she said. "Soldiers are targeting Tigrayan women to stop them giving birth to more Tigrayans."
- Letay Tesfay of the Tigray Women's Association, which runs a safe house for women in Mekelle said to the NYT that rape is being used as a weapon of war. "What's happening is unimaginable," she added.
- "The epidemic of sexual assault is exacerbated by a collapsing health system. Many victims have contracted sexually transmitted diseases, including H.I.V.," doctors told the NYT.
- The doctors said the demand for abortions and emergency contraceptives has risen. One doctor has said that he has received an average of three patients a day since the ENDF occupied Mekelle. Some were raped in IDP camps, others were abducted from the countryside. The youngest he encountered was 14.
- Another 29 year old woman was tied to a tree for 10 days and raped repeatedly. Some soldiers also shot and killed her 12 year old son.
- A waitress in Mekelle says that she and two other women were raped at her place of work. Her body was still covered in bruises.

Reported Situation in Eritrea (as per 01 April)

- More reports of razzias or round ups in Eritrea. Schools have opened and students of the tenth grade are forced to move to Sawa for military training. These include minors of 16th years of age.
- People are trying to run and hide from the round ups.
- Military are searching from house to house to find recruits. They are checking lists of family members to search them or punish relatives if they can not find the youths on the list.
- There are rumours reported amongst Eritrean people that it is merging with Ethiopia and that the Ethiopian navy will take over Eritrean ports. Such rumours can be initiated by "03" responsible for propaganda. At this moment it is not clear what navy capacity Ethiopia has, although it had discussed this ambition of reestablishing a navy and signed an agreement with France in 2018.
- According to the Embassy of Eritrea, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonen, has formally apologized to the people and government of Eritrea for what he called "misguided and unacceptable" remarks made in the previous days by the spokesperson Dina Mufti.
- Dina Mufti speculated on the interest of Eritrean and Ethiopian people to give up their sovereignty and move Eritrea into an integrated Ethiopia.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 01 April)

- Fierce fighting between the ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces, including airstrikes in Southern and Eastern zones of Tigray.
- Reported that Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara forces have engaged in new intensive attack in Eastern and Southern Tigray that include aerial bombardment and artillery shelling.
- Reports of power blackout in all parts of Tigray region.
- Raya University of Tigray is serving as a military camp for both Ethiopian and Eritrean troops as well as a military training compound.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean troops dressed in Tigray forces uniforms have blocked humanitarian aid trucks in Southern Tigray. They were video recording at the scene to accuse Tigrayan forces.
- Tigray interim Administration appointees, Mr. Meles Solomon (Chief Administrator of South-Eastern Zone), Mr. Mulubrhan Haile (Deputy Administrator of North Western zone), Mr. Gidena G/medhin (Deputy head of Water Resources Bureau) and Lilay Hailemariam (Head of Security and Administration Bureau) have been fired from their posts.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 01 April)

- In a new report, OCHA estimates there are 9.6 million displaced people and 4.7 million refugees in the Horn of Africa region.
- They also estimate that 33.8 million people are facing severe food shortages, of these 12.8 million are children.
- Ethiopia's Ministry of Innovation and Technology has consulted and signed an agreement with a Czech company named LIAZ on adaptation and utilization of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).
- Ethiopia's Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) Bureau of Finance said the government has not been able to pay salaries due to budget and cash constraints. Excessive payments for operating expenses are said to be the reason for the lack of cash.

Reported International situation (as per 01 April)

- The United Nations Security Council has said that Somalia needs to find a solution regarding its election impasse at the "earliest opportunity".
- Sudan has asked the United States to add pressure on Ethiopia not to go through with its planned second filling this summer, Sudan also requests the US to join and help move the negotiations forward.
- The Sudan Tribune reported that a Sudanese Major General told them that "There is an option to negotiate and reach an agreement, and there is the option of military action against the dam."
- He said this in the context of Egypt and Sudan holding joint aircraft combat drills.
- The Sudanese Foreign Minister also accused Ethiopia of stalling negotiations in order to be able to go forwards with the second filling.
- An Egyptian water expert has said that there would be large side effects of a second filling of the GERD dam. It could stop the drinking water stations in Eastern Sudan, stop the electricity production at Rosires and Sennar dams due to lack of water and both countries could face billions of cubic meters in water shortages.

Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepa.be any additional information and corrections.

Links of interest

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/01/world/africa/ethiopia-tigray-sexual-assault.html?s=04#click=https://t.co/r3GuULpXiC>

<https://www.fanabc.com/english/ethiopia-consults-with-a-czech-company-on-adaptation-utilization-of-uav/>

<https://addisstandard.com/news-alert-amhara-region-president-warns-fed-govt-to-see-solution-to-stop-amhara-killings-wants-emerge-ncy-meeting/>

<https://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article69386>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/eastern-africa-humanitarian-snapshot-march-2021>