

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 137 - 28 April 2021

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Fighting in Tigray (as per 27 April)

- TMH reported that more than 2000 Eritrean troops has been destroyed by Tigray defense forces near Endabatsahma Woreda, Central Tigray.
- Eritrean soldiers have also been recently spotted in Samre, South of Mekelle. That is 200 kilometers away from the Eritrean - Ethiopian border.
- In a document leaked from an Ethiopian opposition party, revealed that the Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (EZEMA) opposed the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from the Tigray region.
- The document says EZEMA wants Eritrean troops to stay in the fight in Tigray region because ENDF is currently incapable on its own and would lose if Eritrea withdraws.
- According to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, unidentified gunmen attacked truck drivers going from Addis Ababa to Gojam in the North Shewa Zone of the Oromia Regional State. This area is administered by Amhara. Reportedly five drivers were injured in the incident.

Situation in Tigray (as per 27 April)

- Andemariam Yohans, Seb-Hidri Civil Society Tigray's Secretary, and Ass. Prof. in Mekelle University, who was detained by security officers in Mekelle four days back, is still in custody in Kedamay Weyane police station.
- In addition to him, hundreds of men and women remain detained in the Kedamay Weyane police station, with no known reason and no charges presented.
- Hundreds of farmers have been brought from distant villages in Adwa and Axum to the city of Mekelle, and they don't know why they were brought.
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says many health care facilities in the Tigray region have either been looted or destroyed and this is affecting those with experience of sexual violence as they have no access to healthcare.
- Ethiopia National Defence Force uniformed Eritrean soldiers abducted Tigrayan male and female youth from different places of Tigray.
- OCHA has said in a new report that "While humanitarian access has improved, the situation in Tigray remains volatile and is hampering partners' efforts to deliver timely humanitarian assistance."
- As of 19 April, 245,586 people or 9% of the targeted population were reached. "With completed, ongoing, and planned distributions, the cluster could reach 672,401 people (24 percent of target)"
- Getachew Reda, Executive committee member of TPLF appeared on TMH TV and addressed many issues regarding the ongoing fighting.
- He said that the Eritrean Defence Force is not withdrawing from Tigray. He further asserted that they will not leave unless they are forced to.
- He also reiterated his previous claim that the TDF is increasing in strength and has the capacity to strike anywhere and at any time.

- Lastly he called the international community to continue to pressure with actions.

Reported Situation in Eritrea (as per 27 April)

- There have also been several reports of new smuggling and human trafficking routes emerging in Eritrea. Reportedly there has been an increase in demand from Eritrean soldiers trying to leave the country.
- This follows other reports that young, underage Eritreans are being rounded up and being sent to military training camps.
- Radio Erena reported that hundreds of prisoners who are serving terms between 6 months to 5 years imprisonment for misdemeanors were taken from different prisons in Eritrea to Wia camp south of Massawa for military training,

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 27 April)

- TMH said over 100 ethnic Tigrayan members of the Ethiopian peacekeeping mission in Darfur, Sudan, have refused to return back to Ethiopia due to fear of ethnic profiling and mass arrest in Ethiopia.
- The WHO has said that Sudan has launched a vaccination campaign to vaccinate the 77 thousand refugees in Sudanese camps. The region is at a high risk of yellow fever epidemics due to climate and ecological factors. There are also areas where the immunity against the disease is low.
- The Somali President, Farmaajo, has agreed not to extend his presidential term. There have been tensions in Somalia after the elections were delayed. Opposition forces took control of large parts of the capital. It is still unclear whether he will step down
- The Egyptian Prime Minister told local media that Egypt would not give up “a single drop” of its share of the Nile water.
- The Ethiopians have themselves called water sharing treaties dating back 1959 and 1929 as unacceptable.

Reported International situation (as per 27 April)

- The UN unders Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has reiterated that rape is being used as a weapon of war. he said that six months after the conflict started, the rapes had not stopped.
- Speaking to the UNSC, he also said that “They are deliberately and systematically organized, targeted, ethnically based, and they are intended to terrorize, humiliate and brutalize.”
- He is urging for the international community to step in and hold the perpetrators accountable. Political dialogue, but also if necessary sanctions, need to be leveraged to “to ensure respect for the law and the protection of civilians and the objects they depend on to survive”.
- In the same briefing, the President of the ICRC has also said that it is critical “for the Council to show leadership, so that the suffering of the women, men and children who have already lived through the horrors of wars is not compounded”.
- US officials have also said that the US is continuing to pressure Ethiopia to end the conflict and Eritrean soldiers have to leave the region.
- In a phone call with PM Abiy on Monday, Sec State Blinken told Abiy that Eritrea needed to withdraw its troops in a “full, and in a verifiable manner”.

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Links of interest

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/04/1090702>

<https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia>

<https://www.dw.com/en/tigray-crisis-dents-ethiopias-emerging-image/a-57353459>

<https://www.voanews.com/africa/us-continues-non-humanitarian-assistance-pause-pressure-ethiopia-end-tigray-conflict>