

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 149 - 18 May 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 17 May)

- MSF report says huge numbers of people living in the Tigray region's remote and mountainous rural areas have been cut off from essential healthcare for six months, almost invisible to the outside world.
- "When a small MSF mobile team reached the remote village of Adiftaw for the first time, they found the health post had been looted and partially destroyed," said the report.
- The report said medical files, broken equipment, and emptied medicine packets were scattered across the floors of every room. None of the beds had mattresses and there were no staff.
- "When we arrived in Tigray in late 2020, we found that the health system had almost completely collapsed," said MSF emergency coordinator Tommaso Santo. "Once we had set up support in hospitals in big towns such as Adigrat, Axum and Shire, it seemed essential to us to reach the more remote areas where people's needs are greater."
- Santo said: "We are finding people with very little access to drinking water and food distributions, and who cannot do commercial activity due to some markets being closed. Many people are still living in fear in a situation of insecurity."
- Reported that hospitals refurbished by the MSF in the Tigray region were looted and destroyed by Eritrean troops a few days later.
- Dedebit Media said more than 20 ENDF commanders have surrendered to the Tigray defense forces.
- According to Tigray Media House (TMH), Ethiopian soldiers were seen intimidating and beating civilian patients who were being treated at Axum Referral hospital, Central Tigray.
- Reports indicate that there was active and random shelling to the town of Hawzen and its vicinity. More than 20 civilians have been killed and 8 family members are among the victims.
- Reported that over 300 households of ethnic Amhara have been relocated to Adabay, Western Tigray.
- More than seventeen buses loaded with ethnic Amhara's were also relocated to the town of Humera, Western Tigray.
- A letter issued on 10 May 2021 by the Bureau of Rural Land Administration and Use of the Amhara State officially announced leasing of huge plots of land to potential investors in Western Tigray.
- These land plots were previously owned by ethnic Tigrayans residing in western Tigray before they were forcibly displaced.
- In a statement, Seb-Hidri Civil society Tigray said it strongly condemns the ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by the Amhara regional state in Western Tigray.
- Tigray defense forces have dispatched brochures in many Woredas of the Western Tigray motivating the people to continue their resistance against the ENDF, Amhara, and Eritrean forces.

- Many ethnic Amhara that were settled in western Tigray very recently are leaving the area fearing fighting could erupt anytime in western Tigray.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 17 May)

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia says the campaign to exert “undue pressure” against the country is regrettable.
- “In spite of the relentless efforts by the government to engage positively and constructively on concerns raised by partners, it is being given a cold shoulder,” said the ministry.
- The ministry said the Ethiopian government is being forced to question the motives of some of the partners, particularly given the public statements and pronouncements they made recently.
- The ministry added: “They seem to be short of showing a genuine desire to understand and help Ethiopia overcome its current challenges, rather, they would only be counterproductive and exacerbating situations.”
- The ministry further said it should be clear that the push by partners to involve the TPLF in the national dialogue process is unacceptable. TPLF is an outlawed group.
- The ministry has also dismissed aid concerns. “There were indeed difficulties in accessing some pocket areas in Tigray due to security issues but that has now been addressed,” said the ministry.
- The Ethiopian government is giving certificates to the families of soldiers who died in the war on Tigray.
- Addis Standard said gunmen in western Oromia have killed five government employees when they were traveling from Kondella woreda to Mendi.
- Among those killed was Waqqari Kajella, former head of the western Wellega zone peace and security bureau head, and his colleagues.
- Western Wellega zone administrator Elias Umata, quoted accusing the perpetrators as being “Shene gunmen who call themselves the Oromo Liberation Army, and whom the government recently designated as a terrorist organization.”
- The Amaro Special Woreda communication bureau said three civilians were killed, two wounded and more than 6,000 people displaced in the latest attack in Amaro Woreda of the SNNPRS.
- Sudan Motion said unconfirmed reports that the Benshangul-Gumuz Liberation Front has taken control of the Mahal camp, one of the largest camps of ENDF soldiers, which is 10 Km away from the GERD.

Reported International Situation (as per 17 May)

- WHO DG, Tedros Adhanom described the situation in Tigray as “horrific, very horrific” and says the region is facing a horrifying situation with people dying of hunger and health services being destroyed.
- Tedros pointed out that some 5 million people in the region are now in need of humanitarian aid, and especially food. “Many people have started dying actually because of hunger, severe and acute malnutrition is becoming rampant,” he said.
- He also condemned indiscriminate killings and the widespread use of sexual violence in the conflict. “Rape is rampant. I don’t think there was that scale anywhere else in the world actually,” he added.

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Links of interest

<https://msf.org.uk/article/photostory-reaching-forgotten-communities-tigray-crisis>

<https://www.devex.com/news/who-chief-calls-ethiopia-s-tigray-conflict-very-horrific-99927>

<https://news.yahoo.com/situation-ethiopia-tigray-horrific-chief-185813547.html>

<https://addisstandard.com/just-in-ethiopia-says-campaign-to-exert-undue-pressure-against-it-regrettable-push-by-partners-to-involve-the-tplf-in-national-dialogue-unacceptable/>