



Overview of the Preparations to the War in Tigray

13 July 2021

BEFORE THE WAR IN TIGRAY

- On 2 April 2018, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was confirmed and sworn in by the Ethiopian Parliament.
- On 5 June 2018 Abiy agreed to accept the border ruling giving disputed territory to Eritrea.
- Eritrea responded to the Peace offer from PM Abiy, two weeks later.
- On 9 July 2018, Isayas Afwerqi and Abiy Ahmed signed a peace agreement.
- Multiple back and forth visits were made by top officials of both governments.
- PM Abiy visited Eritrea on 19 July 2020. This visit was shrouded in secrecy.

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- During his stay, Abiy visited SAWA military training and attended the graduation ceremony of 33rd round graduates of SAWA.
- PM Abiy extended the national election by unconstitutionally setting up a constitution interpretation body.
- The regional government of Tigray disagreed with the decision.
- On 9 September 2020, Tigray held regional elections and tensions erupted.
- The Government of Ethiopia declared the elections in Tigray as illegal.
- The Ethiopian federal government stopped budget support to Tigray and restricted travel of tourists, investors and international delegations to Tigray.

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- The federal government also stopped supplying COVID-19 masks for students in Tigray, while masks were distributed to the rest of the country.
- The Government of Tigray State said in a statement that Tigray was targeted and conspired against by Ethiopia in collaboration with Eritrea.

AMHARA REGIONAL
FORCES AND MEMBERS OF
THE ENDF

Interview and a speech by members of the ENDF and the Amhara Police Commission suggest they were well prepared for the war.

An ENDF Brigadier General said he had instructed battalions in the Northern Command to get ready in secret before the start of the war.

He added: "We prepared the tanks and bullets for the war and alerted our allies in the Northern Command. We were ahead of them (Tigray)."

Late Commissioner Abere Adamu, Chief of Amhara Police Commission, revealed that Amhara regional state had "already done [its] homework," and "deployment of forces had taken place in our borders from east to west."

He also said: "The war started that night after we have already completed our preparations."

SUDAN BEFORE THE START OF THE WAR IN TIGRAY

- ❑ Head of Sudanese Sovereign Council, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, said he had agreed with the Abiy to deploy Sudanese troops to secure the borders between Ethiopia and Sudan as part of an understanding that actions would take place in Tigray.
- ❑ Al-Burhan added: "On November 01, 2020, I visited Ethiopia shortly before the events, and we agreed with Abiy that the Sudanese armed forces would close the Sudanese borders to prevent border infiltration to and from Sudan by an armed party.

CASCADE OF EVENTS FROM LATE OCTOBER TO EARLY NOVEMBER

- ❑ Two weeks to war, commanders of the ENDF and the Eritrean Army met in Bahir Dar, Amhara's regional capital, to discuss planning and operation in Tigray. (Dedebit Media)
- ❑ On 19 October 2020, the Ethiopian government announced the redeployment of the Northern Command of the ENDF.
- ❑ Parts of the Northern Command were to be redeployed to the new commands, Central command (in Addis Ababa) and North-western command (Bahir Dar).
- ❑ Tigray regional government opposed the redeployment of the Northern command.
- ❑ On 29 October 2020, the late Amb. Seyoum Mesfin, former Foreign Minister, said Abiy has travelled to Asmara in secret on 27 October 2020, and was conspiring with Isayas to wage a war on Tigray.
- ❑ Amb. Seyoum also claimed Isayas's military and security officers were in Bahir Dar, (newly announced north-west Command by ENDF) advising on how they would train, organize and lead the combat.

CASCADE OF EVENTS FROM LATE OCTOBER TO EARLY NOVEMBER

- ❑ On 29 October 2020, the Ethiopian government sent a general to Mekelle, in order to execute the decision to redeploy the Northern Command. The brigadier was barred entry into Mekelle by the Tigray regional government on a reason that his appointment would not be considered legitimate. The constitutional power of Abiy had ended on 5 October.
- ❑ Following the statement from Tigray government, on 01 November 2020, Eritrea issued a statement accusing the TLPF of obstructing regional peace and stability.
- ❑ Other reports on 01 November 2020 also indicate the mobilization of “16 buses” of ENDF members from a military camp in the city of Shilaabo in the Somali regional state.
- ❑ ENDF divisions from different part of the country were also mobilized to the border of Tigray.
- ❑ On 1 November 2020 more than 50 civilians were killed in West Wollega Zone, Guliso Woreda of Oromia Regional State.

CASCADE OF EVENTS FROM LATE OCTOBER TO EARLY NOVEMBER

- ❑ On 02 November 2020, President Debretsion aired a 36-minute televised message.
- ❑ He said the regional government had prepared the Tigray regional defense forces not for war, but to defend themselves.
- ❑ He also cautioned Tigray should “give attention to the situation that is advancing to a war and everyone should be ready.”
- ❑ On 02 November 2020, EU High Representative/Vice-President Borrell released a statement on the growing tension in Ethiopia.
- ❑ EU said developments in Ethiopia are a cause of deep concern. All parties as well as Ethiopia’s neighbours must act to reduce tensions and abstain from military deployment.

CASCADE OF EVENTS FROM LATE OCTOBER TO EARLY NOVEMBER

- ❑ Days before 3 November 2020, information had come out that PM Abiy planned to conduct an operation to arrest top civilian and political leadership of Tigray.
- ❑ He ordered the Northern command division of ENDF to be on a standby mode.
- ❑ Some Ethiopian ENDF troops were airlifted into Asmara before the conflict started.
- ❑ On the evening of 3 November 2020, two Ethiopian planes arrived in Mekelle stating that they were bringing new banknotes.
- ❑ However, the planes transported commando troops (the 'republican guard') to undertake the Tigray leadership capture mission.
- ❑ The Federal government deployed additional commandos from the Northern Command to assist the commandos arrived from Addis Ababa.

CASCADE OF EVENTS FROM LATE OCTOBER TO EARLY NOVEMBER

- ❑ The Tigray regional government stated that it foiled the attempt to arrest the leadership of the regional state government, which it considered an illegal coup.
- ❑ The Tigray government ordered Tigray defense forces to take control over the Northern Command, which had its headquarters in Mekelle, and sixteen different camps in Tigray.
- ❑ A witness also said on 03 to 04 November 2020, prior to the declaration of law and order operation, Eritrean soldiers entered into the town of Gerhu-Serenay in Tigray.
- ❑ The attack by Eritrean troops happened in the night.
- ❑ On 4 November 2020, early morning, Prime Minister Abiy announced that federal forces were instructed to begin a military Law and order Operation in Tigray.

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OVERVIEW OF LIVELIHOOD COLLAPSE AND DISRUPTION IN TIGRAY

AGRICULTURE (CROP SECTOR)

The war in Tigray was launched at the time of crop harvesting season.

Estimated that 90 to 95% of farmers in Tigray lost their harvest due to the war.

Their crops were looted and destroyed by Amhara forces, Eritrean troops and Ethiopian defense forces.

The looting also includes cooking utensils, household materials and farming equipment's. Houses of farmers in Tigray were also burned into ashes.

Eritrean troops burned and looted farming equipment of Tigrayan farmers and prevented them from ploughing their land until recently.

Over 50% farmers training centers were looted and destroyed (TBoA).

LIVESTOCK SECTOR

- ❑ Tigray has an estimated 17million livestock population.
- ❑ It is estimated that millions of cattle, sheeps, goats, chickens and donkeys were looted, slaughtered and killed by the Amhara forces, Ethiopian soldiers and Eritrean troops.
- ❑ Farmers in Tigray also lost their beehives, vegetable and fruits gardens. They were looted, destroyed and burned by Eritrean troops and ENDF allied Amhara forces.
- ❑ Over 70% of fruits, animal feed and seedling sites and centers were looted and destroyed (TBoA).

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- Over 75% of livestock population of Tigray were slaughtered, looted and killed.
- Over 80% of animal clinics were also destroyed and looted by Eritrean and ENDF allied Amhara forces (TBoA).
- All (85) Milk concentration and processing Centers in Tigray were destroyed (TBoA).

HORTI-FARMS (WESTERN AND SOUTHERN TIGRAY)

- ❑ Most of the Horti-farms in Western and Southern Tigray were looted and destroyed by Amhara and Eritrean forces.
- ❑ Western Tigray is known by its “Sesame” production - serving mainly for export and local oil producing factories.
- ❑ In Southern and Western Tigray, investors has lost billions worth of horti- farms, milk processing and anima fatening factories.
- ❑ Southern Tigray was producing fresh fruits and vegetables mainly for export.
- ❑ Almost all animal fatening and milk processing factories were also looted and destroyed in other parts of Tigray.

Thank You