

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 123 - 09 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 08 April)

- Ethiopian and Eritrean forces are leaving Wukro Maray and Selekleka, due to pressure by TDF.
- Reports that seven civilians were killed by Eritrean forces in Freweyni town, Eastern Tigray.
- TMH reported that over 30 civilians were killed by Eritrean troops in Hawzen, Eastern Tigray.
- Reported that more than 200 civilians were also killed by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces around Wukro Maray between Shire and Axum.
- Reports of Tigrayan ethnic monks displaced from Waldeba Monastery with welts from being beaten by Amhara forces circulate in social media.
- More than 900 internally displaced monks were believed to be residing in Shire town.
- The Financial Times (FT) has spoken to Gezae Wolderaphael, who fled from Mai Kadra, western Tigray and now an IDP in Mekelle, says he was beaten by a rifle butt and knife on his face and shoulder. "They put a gun in my mouth," he adds, before stabbing him and leaving him for dead in the street.
- Solomon Hailselassie, a young farmer who fled from Mai Kadra, blamed the Amhara militia who he says targeted Tigrayans. "Kill them all. Leave nobody from age seven to 70 alive," he heard people he identified as Amhara militia members saying. He says he lost 15 friends in two days of violence.
- Solomon said: "I saw it when they cut a guy's arms and legs and slit his throat. But they didn't kill, they left him there. They wanted him to suffer."
- Chidi Odinkalu, senior manager for Africa with the Open Society Foundations told FT that: "Clearly the economic miracle is over and I don't think anybody knows where this is going. Frankly, I don't think Abiy knows where this is going."
- Reported that Eritrean troops entered the Tigray Northern town of Adigrat on 18 November 2020 after heavy fighting that started on 17 November 2020 when a lot of people were killed or run away.
- Reported that on Saturday 19 November 2020 entered Adigrat with ten tanks and "were killing anyone in the streets". The witness says "we were about 5.000 people and about 300 were under fire and some were killed and others injured.
- The Eritrean troops attacked a place for Eritrean refugees arriving from Eritrea in Adigrat. They killed six Eritrean refugees, while there was heavy fighting. Their names are known to the witness.
- According to the witness, the Eritrean troops rounded up Eritrean and Tigray people and told them to get their shoes. They then took them by foot to Edaga Hamus to Sarha, near Zalembeša.
- Once the group had arrived in Zalembeša, they were split and Eritrean refugees were deported to Eritrea. A group of 60 Eritreans escaped and were helped by local people.
- The group went to Irob and stayed until 2 January 2021. On that day they were praying in a church when fighting started. A lot of people were hurt. The troops were Eritrean fighters.
- During the shooting young children were killed and the eye witness saw children killed of 11, 12 years old. There were 37 people killed according to the eye witness. The eye witness has fled Tigray.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 08 April)

- The Ministry of Peace of Ethiopia has hired a second lobbying firm amid escalating U.S. criticism of the country's handling of the conflict in Tigray region.

- Peace Minister Muferiat Kamil signed a six month, \$45,000-a-month contract with global law firm Holland and Knight on March 12, 2021.
- The contract with lobby firm Holland and Knight comes a little over a month after the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington hired lobbying firm Venable for a 35,000-per-month contract, for an initial three months.
- The firm will provide strategic counsel and federal government relations assistance for Congress and the Joe Biden administration. It is thought that concern in Ethiopia is growing over further sanctions.
- The Ethiopian National Defense Force said the recently released video of Mahbere Diego showing killing of innocent civilians in Tigray is a complete fabrication and drama orchestrated by TPLF junta.
- Amnesty International and Belingcat has provided detailed evidence the video was real, and CNN and BBC carried out additional investigation into the killings.
- Communication affairs bureau of Amaro Woreda in the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) said sustained attacks by armed groups left at least 12 civilians killed, eight injured and more than 11, 000 people internally displaced.

Reported International situation (as per 08 April)

- Uganda and Egypt have signed a “military intelligence sharing agreement”.
- Finish Foreign minister and EU envoy Haavisto is warning that the situation in Tigray could lead to a second migration crisis in Europe.
- The instability that the conflict is creating in Africa, could lead to exploitation by non-state actors such as Al-Qaeda. The turbulence is fuelling radicalisation. The security issue is not confined to the Tigray region, Ethiopia has been a key partner in fighting terrorism in many other regions.
- USAID has announced more than \$152 million in additional humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the Tigray crisis.
- White House national security advisor Jake Sullivan expressed U.S. concern over the crisis in the Tigray region in a call with Ethiopia’s deputy prime minister, Demeke Mekonen.
- The two discussed critical steps to address the crisis, including expanded humanitarian access, cessation of hostility, departure of foreign troops and independent investigation into atrocities and human rights violations.
- IOM estimates that Ethiopia has over 1.82 million IDPs across 1298 sites.
- A recent survey by the research group Humanitarian Outcomes, shows that less than half of respondents in Tigray have received humanitarian aid. 96% of people said that they needed aid.
- Those that did receive humanitarian aid say that it is not enough. It was conducted by phone.
- Approximately 40% of people believe that the government or the military is restricting the distribution of aid. Another 30% does not know what is limiting the distribution of aid, while 20% believe it is due to insecurity.

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Links of interest

<https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-8-2021-united-states-announces-more-152-million-additional-humanitarian>

<https://www.fanabc.com/english/natl-defense-force-dismisses-grossly-manipulated-video-as-complete-fabrication/>

<https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/africa/eu-s-ethiopia-envoy-warns-of-looming-tigray-refugee-crisis-and-radicalisation-1.1198>

https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/score_tigray_report_2021_v2.pdf

<https://www.ft.com/content/8f18a8bf-0999-43e6-9636-3581a8a2c249?segmentid=acee4131-99c2-09d3-a635-873e61754ec6>

<https://www.foreignlobby.com/2021/02/11/ethiopia-hires-lobbying-help-amid-dual-threats-from-egypt-human-rights-sanctions/>

<https://www.foreignlobby.com/2021/04/08/ethiopias-ministry-of-peace-hires-lobbying-firm-amid-war-in-tigray/>