



China accuses EU of 'hypocrisy' after ambassadors summoned

Dhaka defends use of barbed-wire fences after Rohingya camp blaze



MEKELE: A general view, through a broken glass, of a bus station in Wukro, north of Mekele. Every phase of the four-month-old conflict in Tigray has brought suffering to Wukro, a fast-growing transport hub once best-known for its religious and archaeological sites. —AFP

Over 100 killed in Tigray massacre: Rights body

Abiy admits Eritrean troops crossed the border into Tigray

NAIROBI: The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission said yesterday that Eritrean soldiers killed over 100 civilians in a November massacre in war-torn Tigray that may amount to crimes against humanity. The findings by the government-affiliated but independent body corroborate separate investigations by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch into the same killings in the historic town of Axum.

"Information collected during this preliminary investigation confirm that during the two days of November 28 and November 29, grave violations of human rights were committed and that in Axum, over one hundred residents... were killed by Eritrean soldiers," the commission said. "As these grave human rights violations may amount to crimes against humanity or war crimes, it underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into overall human rights situation in Tigray region."

The latest report comes after Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed admitted for the first time that Eritrean troops had crossed the border into Tigray, and suggested they may have been involved in abuses against civilians. Addis Ababa and Asmara had for months flatly denied the involvement of Eritrean forces in the conflict, and described reports of their alleged atrocities in the region as misinformation and propaganda.

'Door to door'

The EHRC conducted a fact-finding mission to Axum, a UNESCO World Heritage site, in late February and early March after earlier attempts to reach the town were "impeded by the security situation". The rights commission spoke to dozens of witnesses who said Eritrean troops shot unarmed civilians and fired on those who tried to collect their bodies. "Eritrean soldiers went door to door asking women 'where their husbands or children were' telling them 'to bring their sons out if they have any'," the report stated. Corpses were left in the streets for days, some being dismembered by animals, witnesses said.

Like Amnesty and HRW—which separately reported hundreds butchered in Axum—the EHRC could not provide an exact death toll. The commission was still verifying more victims and investigating other alleged atrocities in areas around Axum, it

said. Eritrean and Ethiopian troops were also accused of looting hospitals—even taking hospital beds and mattresses—resulting in crippling medicine and equipment shortages that resulted in patient deaths, the report said. Abiy sent troops into Tigray on November 4 after he blamed the region's ruling party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, for attacks on federal army camps. He declared fighting over in late November with the capture of the regional capital but reports of widespread rape, murder and looting by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have spurred calls for an investigation. The United Nations, among other members of the international community, have urged Eritrean troops to withdraw from Tigray.

The military campaign to unseat the TPLF—which dominated national politics for decades—has led to a drawn-out conflict that has seen brutal atrocities carried out against civilians. In a wide-ranging speech to parliament, Abiy said the "Eritrean people and government did a lasting favor to our soldiers", during the conflict, without giving details.

"However, after the Eritrean army crossed the border and was operating in Ethiopia, any damage it did to our people was unacceptable," he said. "We don't accept it because it is the Eritrean army, and we would not accept it if it were our soldiers. The military campaign was against our clearly targeted enemies, not against the people. We have discussed this four or five times with the Eritrean government."

National security issues

Abiy said that according to the Eritrean government, its soldiers had taken over trenches on the border—which had been dug during the bloody 1998-2000 war between the two nations—after they were abandoned by Ethiopian soldiers. "Eritrea told us it had national security issues and as a result had seized areas on the border" but had vowed to leave if Ethiopian soldiers returned to the trenches. He said Eritrea argued the TPLF pushed them to enter the battle "by firing rockets" across the border.

"The Eritrean government has severely condemned alleged abuses and has said it will take measures against any of its sol-

diers accused of such." Amnesty International has said Eritrean troops had killed hundreds in the town of Axum, while AFP spoke to residents of the village of Dengolat, where the church counted 164 dead. In his speech Abiy accused Amnesty, the United Nations and other agencies of being "part of the TPLF family". However he admitted there had been abuses. "Battle is destructive, it hurts many, there is no question about it. There have been damages that happened in Tigray region, notwith-

standing the propaganda and lies, information indicates there have been rapes of women and looting of properties."

Eritrea, one of the world's most repressive and secretive nations, gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993, and relations quickly deteriorated over territorial and economic disputes. Five years later the two launched into a bloody war which left 80,000 dead, and led to a diplomatic stalemate long after a peace deal was signed in 2000. —AFP

Congo's Nguesso re-elected with 88.57% of vote

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo: The Republic of Congo's veteran president, Denis Sassou Nguesso, has been re-elected with 88.57 percent of the vote, according to provisional results released Tuesday. Sassou Nguesso, 77, has been in power for an accumulated 36 years, first taking the helm of the central African state in 1979. His landslide first-round victory, announced by the interior minister citing figures from the electoral commission, had been widely expected.

Sunday's ballot had been boycotted by the main opposition and overshadowed by the death from COVID of Sassou Nguesso's only major rival, Guy-Brice Parfait Kolelas, 61, who garnered 7.84 percent of the vote. Turnout was measured at 67.55 percent.

One of the world's longest-serving rulers, Sassou Nguesso has long been accused by critics of authoritarian rule and turning a blind eye to corruption, poverty and inequality despite the country's oil wealth. "By this vote, the people in their majority responded and said that we had the capacity to bounce back, to recover our economy and to move towards development," he said in brief comments to reporters. Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno, considered a shoo-in to extend his own 30-year rule in April 11 elections, congratulated Sassou Nguesso on his "brilliant reelection."

Rival's death

Kolelas, the son of a former prime minister who was a leading government critic, died aboard a medical plane that flew him to Paris on polling day, his campaign director Christian Cyr Rodrigue Mayanda



BRAZZAVILLE, Commune de Brazzaville: Supporters of Congo's re-elected President Denis Sassou Nguesso gather to celebrate the election results outside the headquarters of the ruling Congolese Labor Party (PCT) in Brazzaville. —AFP

said. Kolelas initially thought he had malaria, but belatedly discovered that it was COVID-19, a friend of his said. He posted a video from his sickbed, declaring he was "battling against death" and urging followers to "rise up as one person."

Mathias Dzon, a former finance minister who picked up 1.9 percent of the vote, announced on Monday that he would file suit to the Constitutional Court to overturn the vote, which he described as "disastrous." On polling day, access to the internet and social media, as well as text messages, was cut while in the centre of the capital Brazzaville, shops were closed and only security vehicles were seen.

In some areas voters complained that their names were not on the electoral list. The victory, placing Sassou Nguesso on course for another five-year term, marks his fourth election win since 2002. The former paratrooper first rose to power in 1979. He served three presidential terms until he was forced to introduce multi-party elections in 1991 and was defeated at the ballot box the following year. But he returned to power in 1997 following a prolonged civil war. —AFP

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN
Ministry of Housing

ملكيّة البحرين
وزارة الإسكان

The Ministry of Housing would like to announce the tender for the following works:

Tender Title	Tender No.	Tender/Initial Bond	Documentation Fee	Closing Date & Time	
Construction of 256 Social Apartment Units & its associated External Woks & Infrastructure in Village C1/C2 at East Hidd in the Kingdom of Bahrain funded through the Kuwait Grant under the GCC Development Program to the Kingdom of Bahrain. (Package – A)	HP/07/20	BD 50,000 /-	BD 100 /- (non-refundable)	Sunday, 09-May-2021	1:30 PM (Bahrain local time)
Construction of 264 Social Apartment Units & its associated External Woks & Infrastructure in Village B1/B2 at East Hidd in the Kingdom of Bahrain funded through the Kuwait Grant under the GCC Development Program to the Kingdom of Bahrain. (Package – B)	HP/08/20	BD 50,000 /-	BD 100 /- (non-refundable)	Sunday, 09-May-2021	1:30 PM (Bahrain local time)

- Suitably eligible and qualified contractors are invited to participate in the above-mentioned Tender Packages. Eligibility to participate shall be given to Kuwaiti Grade 'A' Contractor registered with the Kuwaiti Central Tender Committee; and Contractors registered in Bahrain should be categorized as Grade A with the Ministry of Housing and/or Grade AA in Building Construction Projects with the Ministry of Works, Kingdom of Bahrain in a Joint Venture with any Kuwaiti Eligible Contractor. Full details of the tenderer's eligibility and qualification criteria are provided in the Invitation for Qualification document.
- This is a public tender whereby the prequalification of tenderers is combined with the submission of their technical and financial proposals. Full details are provided in the Invitation for Qualification Document no. QD EHH-HP-2020 attached to each of the tender Packages. This tender is a two-envelope tender and the prequalification & technical bids will be opened first and the financial bid of technically qualified tenderers only will be opened later.
- This tender is through the Bahrain Tender Board E-Tendering System and eligible contractors who wish to participate for above mentioned Project shall have to purchase and download the Documents online through the Bahrain Tender Board's portal <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.bh>. The tender documents shall be available for purchase and download beginning from Sunday, 21-Mar-2021 up to Sunday, 18-Apr-2021.
- Contractors who are not yet registered in the Bahrain Tender Board's e-tendering system shall be required to register through the below-mentioned link. Details of registration are provided online at the Bahrain Tender Board website. For technical assistance please contact the Tender Board through email address helpdesk@tenderboard.gov.bh or call on Tel No. +973-17566666.

<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.bh/Tenders/registerUser>

- The completed Tender which comprise of the Application for Qualification, Technical and Financial Proposal documents shall be submitted online in accordance with the Instruction to Tender and the E-Tendering Guidelines of the Bahrain Tender Board. The Tenderer should include and enclose in his offer the Tender Bond for the amount specified above. The Tender Bond should be in the form and manner as prescribed in the tender document valid for 180 days from the closing date.
- This Tender is in accordance with the provision of the Kingdom of Bahrain's Law Regulating Government Tenders & Purchases No. (36) of 2002 and Its Implementing Regulations issued by Decree No. (37) of 2002; and is subjected to the Unified Rules for Giving Priority to National Products and Products of a National Origin (Article 8, Prime Ministerial Edict No. 21 of 1987).
- For any query regarding the invitation, please contact: Cost Engineering Section, Ministry of Housing, P.O. Box 5802, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, Tel. No.: +973-17533000-ext.519, Email: Chandramohan.Krishnapilla@housing.gov.bh.
- This advertisement shall be a supplementary to the Tender Document.