

Tigray Invading Force's Incurred Extensive Damage on the Amhara Regional State: a census study [First Draft]

1. Introduction

In its 1976 manifesto, the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) publicly declared that the people of Amhara are its arch enemy. As a result of this political declaration, the TPLF-dominated coalition designed and implemented a shrewd policy and strategy to sow the fruits of discord and hate on the Ethiopian people in general and on the people of Amhara in particular. Immediately after being forced to give up their administrative powers due to popular protests in 2018, TPLF started mobilizing the Tigrayan people for an invasion and attacked the Northern Command on the evening of November 03, 2020, with an illusion that it would easily prevail in an armed confrontation. On the same day, the invading forces also launched a full-scale offensive in the central Gondar Zone in a town called Qerakirin in the Amhara region. Equally as conniving, the TPLF, began to churn out a misinformation campaign to get the backing of the international community.

After the federal government of Ethiopia declared a unilateral truce and secession of hostilities on June 2021, the Tigrayan invading forces disregarded the olive branch and invaded the Amhara and Afar states. More specifically in the Amhara State, where this research focused, eight zonal administrations of the Amhara Regional State, which were ultimately left with a humanitarian, material, psychological catastrophe and internal scars that cannot be measured. As a result of this invasion, 1,411,313 were displaced in temporary shelters and 10,824,143 civilians became severely malnourished.

In line with the above-stated realities, this large-scale study was, therefore, aimed to uncover the humanitarian crisis the invasion incurred, the material loss and the economic burden the people of Amhara suffered. This scientific document is intended to be used as a baseline and aims to direct or influence the policy decisions of government and non-governmental agencies, to build awareness for the international community about the results of the humanitarian crisis, bring focus on the

psychological scar and material loss incurred on the people of Amhara, and to enlighten the scientific community.

The large-scale study has shown that, as a result of the Tigrayan invading forces, people living in those eight zonal administrations suffered tremendously and have experienced immense humanitarian, economic, and psychological losses. The hostile forces from Tigray were indiscriminate in their shelling of innocent people. The research has gained evidence that suggests that hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians were killed (which constitutes signs of genocide and crimes against humanity). In addition to this physical abuse and rape were carried out in a systematic manner. Especially, many women and adolescent girls were brutalized and taken advantage of during the aforementioned time. In many instances, married women were raped in front of their husbands, raped in front of their priests, and raped in front of their family members which aimed at ultimately humiliating and inflicting maximum suffering and psychological trauma. This study has also shown that many women were gang-raped by groups of the invading forces with complete disregard for their morals and dignity. This was a regular occurrence.

The Objectives of this research is to

- retrieve a census report and document the humanitarian crisis in addition to the material damages;
- and to determine and catalog the specific kind and magnitude of the humanitarian crisis, psychological terror, decimated public infrastructures, and material loss that the invading forces incurred at both individual and organizational levels;

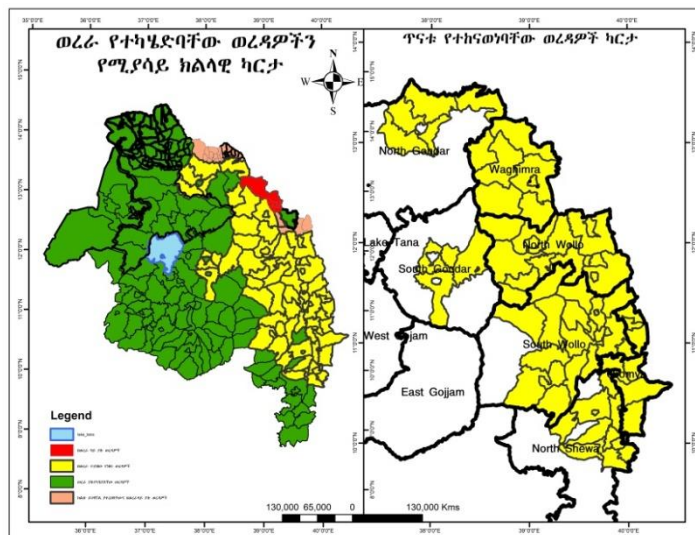
The Studies Significance is to

- Help the Amhara people to rehabilitate resiliently from the psychological and humanitarian trauma, inform policymakers in setting the strategies to deter such invasions from happening in the future, and serve as a baseline for any future studies;
- Secondly to help to raise awareness to the international community of the holistic crisis that the people of Amhara incurred as the result of the Tigrayan invading forces;
- and lastly to help to have a database regarding the kind and magnitude of the humanitarian, psychological and material damage.

4. Methodology

The study was conducted in eight administrative zones of the Amhara Region which were under the invasion of the Tigrayan forces, constituting in total 87 woredas and 945 Kebeles from December 16, 2021, until May 8, 2022. Different professionals were involved in conducting and facilitating the research work including the **Forum for Higher Education Institutes in Amhara Region**, the Ethiopian statistics **Service**, and other concerned partners; to mention a few.

This study is basically conducted using census method. Subsequently, ranges of quantifiable data were collected from the entire population at the household level, and analyzed accordingly via quantitative approach. However, apart from census-based quantitative method, the study also employed qualitative methods with a view to be acquainted with the nature and type of the damage caused particularly in relation to the violation of human rights and related atrocities. To this end, the study employed in-depth interviews (key informant interviews), checklists, Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and field observation data coupled with photos and videos to obtain the qualitative data.



3. Scope of the Study

- ✓ The census was done only in the areas (North and South Wollo, Oromo, North Shewa, North and South Gondar and Waghimra zone of the Amhara region) liberated from the Tigrayan invading forces (constituting 87 districts and 945 Kebeles). Thus, this study didn't cover the area under occupation in those 8 zonal administrations).
- ✓ Additionally, the results of this study did not include the damage incurred on the federal institutions, such as financial institutions, dry ports, train stations, aviation and airport facilities.
- ✓ The civilian logistical cars and trucks robbed by the invading forces were not covered.
- ✓ As this study couldn't set the price, the damage on the historical and cultural heritage were not calculated.
- ✓ The prices and costs of the endemic animals killed or the overall value of the parks was not included.
- ✓ Last, but not the least, the overall budgetary costs the Amhara regional state used to avert the invasion was not part of this study.

5. Major findings

The damage caused on the Amhara people due to the invasion can be widely categorized as humanitarian, material and psychological, and are identified at both individual and institutional levels. Despite the overall economic and psychological damages generally incurred by the Amhara people, in total 828,862 innocent civilians were directly affected by the Tigray aggressor. When we look at the rate in terms of sex and age, among the total victims 409,178 and 263,328 were women and children, respectively.

The following sub-sections briefly explain the type, nature and magnitude of the specific damages incurred by the Amhara people due to the aggression according to the aforementioned categories of damage; namely humanitarian, psychological and material.

5.1. Human Rights Violations and Crimes against Humanity

5.2.1 Survivors of Humanitarian crisis

Due to the large-scale invasion of the Tigray force, the Amhara people incurred a myriad of humanitarian damages. Crimes against humanity and war crimes have been committed in the occupied territories where a total of 240,236 persons were identified to be the subject of brutal

human right violations. Killings of civilians, minor and major bodily/physical injuries, rape, beating/torturing, forced labor (forcing civilian to make fortification or forts for defense as well as loading the same with guns and equipment in war time), abduction or disappearance of persons, use of local people as human shield, ethnic-based abuses and insults, intimidations and the like were evidenced.

5.1.2 Kidnapped individuals who have not been found

When the Tigrayan invading forces invaded lands in the Amhara region it systematically kidnapped 7,506 individuals whose whereabouts were not known and still to this day have not been discovered.

5.1.3 Acts of Genocide and Massacre

Looking at the extent of the damage separately: for example, some 6,985 civilians were killed. Of those killed, 2808 were shot, 579 were beaten to death, and 271 died of starvation. According to the census data, 1,797 persons were victims of genocide. Similarly, the qualitative data obtained from field observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions reaffirmed the existence of these acts of genocide. Chena, Kewot, (two mass graves), Menz Gera (two mass graves), Antsokiya Gemza (six mass graves), Agamisa, Kombolicha, and Merssa are found to be the sites of their genocidal crimes.

On Rape

Raping local residents was among the major war crimes committed by the Tigray invading forces in relation to which 1,782 persons were reported as victims. The existence of rape incidents committed by a man against another man (22 men were victims of sodomy), group rape and rapes made against religious leaders wife's and before one's own spouse or family particularly exhibit the extremely immoral nature and inherent cruelty of the Tigray invading force. It particularly shows how far this force may go to humiliate and embarrass the Amhara people as an expression of its old age hatred.

5.2. Psychological and mental health suffering has been widespread

Tigrayan invading forces have attacked the moral and societal fabric of the Amhara people. This large-scale study has shown that there were widespread attempts to create a horrifying and chaotic atmosphere by exposing the people to war, using them as human shields, having them suffer agonizing deaths, having them forcibly displaced, creating family separation, and, contributing to their overall despair. All these were done to degrade the peoples of the aforementioned areas. All of these have led to mental health issues that will have long-lasting cognitive complexations according to some moderate predictions. In the census, it was shown that 429,443 people were living with psychological and mental scars. Among those psychological survivors, 73.6% of them exhibited two or more psychological problems. For example, 70% of the survivors suffered from anxiety, 64% from depression, 55% from hopelessness, 50% from a post-traumatic stress disorder and 34% from suicidal tendencies. Among the people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (total being 213,694), 128,622 (which is 87%) have had either attempted suicide or suicidal intentions. In general, this study has shown that the people of Amhara suffered emotionally, mentally and behavior-wise, which will have a long-lasting effect.

5.3. The Material Damages incurred has also been well documented.

During the Tigray invading forces expansion, a number of household assets, government and non-governmental organizations, private organizations, companies and infrastructure were outright destroyed. According to the finding's calculations, the damage in monetary value was 288,016,448,452 billion birr. Among these damages, an estimated 9,144,947,808 was recorded from Household assets losses and over 278,871,500,644 were recorded on governmental institutions and infrastructural damage. The extent of the devastation is widespread and is indiscriminate. Plainly speaking people have lost their livelihoods and the entire region has been utterly ruined.

5.3.1. When speaking on damages: Health Facilities has taken a big hit

International Humanitarian Law states mandatory protection of health facilities or services during armed conflicts. Failure to comply with this United Nations Security Council resolution is considered a war crime. In spite of these international norms and laws, the brutal invasion of the Tigrayan forces targeted, robbed and destroyed these facilities in the Amhara Region. More than 748 health facilities were looted or dismantled with an estimated loss of more than 12,340,644,880 birr. More than 383 health posts and 234 health centers, which are collectively coined Primary Health Care Units (PHCUs), were damaged or robbed by the Tigrayan invaders. These Primary Health Care Units were supposed to serve or provide primary health care services to

the wider rural population of the affected areas or the region in general. Moreover, 24 primary 2 general and 2 comprehensive specialized hospitals rendering primary to advanced curative services were utterly destroyed. Four blood banks, an oxygen production plant and 64 ambulances which were crucial in delivery of emergency or lifesaving health services were looted or damaged. One rehabilitation center and a Public Health Research Center, which were among the few institutions in the region or the country in general, were looted or dismantled during the invasion. The private health facilities were supposed to play a pivotal role in complementing the government's effort in enhancing the coverage of health services in Ethiopia. In spite of this fact, the Tigrayan invading forces robbed or damaged more than 47 clinics and 17 pharmacies. More than 32 district health offices or zonal health departments administering the government and private health facilities were damaged. Overall, the damages of the health sectors adversely affected the delivery and access to much-needed health services. This forced 12 million victims of the affected and nearby areas of the region to live with lack or accessible health services. More than 800 citizens died because of impaired access to health services.

5.3.2. The education Sector was also severely damaged

Like Health facilities, the education sector is supposed to be protected from any damage during armed conflicts. In spite of these international rules and norms, all these were disregarded by the Tigrayan invading forces. They forcibly looted and damaged more than 1,165 places of education which include 104 Preschools, 928 Primary schools, 108 secondary schools, and 5 Teaching/training colleges. The majority of the buildings, laboratories, books and other supplies were damaged or looted which amount to 5,917,953,429 birr. As a result, more than half a million children or students were forced to discontinue their education, and their families were also suffering from moral and psychological trauma.

In addition to this, those higher education Universities (in Wello, Weldya, and Mekdela Amba) which are found in the devastated areas have incurred heavy losses totaling 19,423,611,067 birr.

5.3.3. In regards to Culture and tourism sector:

The Tigrayan invading forces also damaged 54 cultural and tourism institutions that were working to advocate for the culture and values of the Amhara people. More than 868 tourism institutions with an estimated loss of 9,740,595,623 birr had been damaged during the destructive invasion. More than 457 priceless historical heritages were looted or damaged, and this included the emperor Minilik the II's telescope and sword used at the battle of Adwa during the first Italian invasion. Most importantly, the invaders damaged parks (Such as the Agamsa national park), removed endemic trees, and animals were killed or

mutilated. In a nutshell, the region has lost more than 1,439,990,893 birr that it would have gained as a result of the damages to the tourism sector. It should be stated that religious institutions are free of politics and have been working to preserve or build the moral and values of the society for centuries. In spite of this, the Tigrayan invading forces damaged 190 churches and mosques, which resulted in moral and psycho-social injury of the society.

5.3.4. The Amhara state's Industrial damage also saw heavy losses

For the last couple of years, Amhara region industrialization has started to expand. However, the Tigray invading forces pinpointed the most industrialized town in the Amhara state, like Kombolcha, which contributes 60 % of the region's industrialized capacity. In general, a total of 180 industries were damaged in the targeted areas including; 49 Agro, 22 textile garment, 65 wood and metal and 44 chemical and construction complexes. The total damages that were calculated concerning the industrial shortcomings revealed that the devastation amounted to 38 billion Birr.

5.3.5. Agriculture and natural resources damages were also widespread

The majority of the people in the region depend on agriculture. Seeing that the livelihood of the inhabitants are reliant on Agriculture production the Tigray invading forces started their attack during the peak agriculture period. During the invasion, agricultural assets at the household level, various organization offices and other equipment under the organization were destroyed. Among the damaged agricultural household assets, crops (cereals, pulses, oil crops, vegetables, root and tubers and fruit trees) and livestock were devastated. For example, 4,418 oxen, 2,773 cows, 1,945 heifers, 13,622 sheep, 8,250 goats and 77,407 chickens were slaughtered or eaten by the invading forces. The losses to livestock reach 50,841,846,976 Birr.

In addition to this, the natural resource costs due to the armed invasion amounted to 18,616,390,159 birr. Concerning the damage of Agricultural institutions such as Agricultural Research Centers (Sirinka and Sekota), Soil and tissue culture laboratories, animal and plant health clinics and Farmer's training centers incurred a loss of 20,854,966,132 billion birr.

In all zonal, woreda and kebele administration level offices, the damages amount to 2,933,868,819 birr and vehicles which gave crucial services in all levels of government and non-government functions were damaged and looted with a loss of 300,239,932 birr.

5.3.6. Drinking water service and irrigation loses still persist

In the invaded area, a large number of drinking water and irrigation infrastructure had been damaged. A number of drinking water infrastructure projects such as 61 developed spring water fountains, 43 Hand dug wells, 16 bore holes, 59 water service offices, 25 pipe lines, 10 water tankers and water distribution points were damaged and 10 generators looted. These damages and loses are estimated at a price of 1,906,781,856 birr. In regards to irrigation infrastructure, the damages were noticeable on various levels of canals, small-scale dams, ponds and crops growing under supplementary irrigation. In addition, crops in the area have not been produced during subsequent irrigation seasons because of these gross barriers and problems. Considering all the above damage and crisis, the study confirmed 26,513,831,424 birr worth of damages and loses to irrigation and drinking water.

5.3.7. And lastly the research finding went out to explore Damages to government and public utilities

Large-scale government offices were destroyed and looted in all the zones that were invaded. As a result, the damage to office equipment, buildings, and other public and government facilities was estimated at 33,277,769,985 birr.

6. Conclusion

Overall, this brutal invasion resulted in innumerable death, and humanitarian, economic, and psycho-social crises in the Amhara region or we can say Ethiopia in general. To this effect, the majority of the children who were affected in the devastated areas have been forced to discontinue their education, and mothers, children or people of the area have been suffering from death and adverse health consequences because of lack or absence of basic health services. The wide range of damage to the agriculture and industry sectors might increase the unemployment rate or push the affected population of the region to live below the poverty line.

7. Recommendations

This study suggested that the regional and federal governments and other stockholders should design and implement urgent and sustainable strategies to mitigate the reported extreme humanitarian, economic and psycho-social crises. The execution of these crucial strategies highly demands resource mapping and

mobilization. The findings of this study suggested the crucial importance of ensuring legal and political protection for the Amahara people to sustainability curve and prevent such a catastrophic decline in the livelihood of the people. A shared political solution could also help to further prevent these occurrences of the multi-fasted crises.