



Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change  
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## Eritrean Government Covid-19 Pandemic Excuse Is Starving Afar Eritreans in Dankalia

It is with great dismay to learn that Eritreans living the in Red Sea coast had been deprived access to their land and sea resources for a longtime. Since independence, they were once again subjected to cruel treatment by the Eritrean government. The situation of the Eritrean Afar people is dire now more than ever. For generations, the Afar population of Eritrea were mainly dependent on fishing for their daily dietary needs. In addition, this sea faring people of the Horn had supplemented their food source by trading with coastal towns in the Eastern flank of the sea. Today they are completely denied their right to use the resource readily available in their doorsteps. Even food aid sent by well-wishing persons from the Gulf was confiscated and the steamers that carried food and medicine barely escaped the wrath of the regime.

Due to routine joint naval, and military exercises, and cooperation with countries across the sea, they had been continuously harassed by security forces. By leasing the port of Assab to illegal occupants in the name of “foreign investors”, they had been cordoned, and deprived of food, and medicine and their livelihood is in grave danger. This time using the Covid-19 Pandemic as an excuse have completely sealed the region exposing them to starvation. Reports indicate that score of people including children died in the past few days alone. Their case is succinctly expressed in the statement issued by The Eritrean Afar National Congress published early this week. The statements reads “Since the Eritrean government restrictions was introduced in March following a worldwide pandemic, there has been an increased number of Afar people detained in the coastal villages and bordering trade routes across Dankalia. Our source have confirmed that the government of Eritrea has detained a number of Afar civilians and confiscated their food supplies in **Harsille, Eddi and Badda** and other locations, as well as sealing off all critical access points by sea and land for transporting much needed food supplies for the population of Dankalia”.



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The Government of Eritrea which is already in the United Nations list as the worst human rights violators continue to detain and secretly liquidate dissenters. It has forbade humanitarian organizations to operate, closed schools and clinics and expanded its National Service program in order to sequestrate the young from the general population or tie them to servitude. Without doubt this remains the primary cause for the exodus of an estimated half a million young and adult forfeiting their homeland in search of finding a niche where they can live peacefully and chase their dream.

The Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change (ENCDC) takes this opportunity to appeal to the International community to condemn the inhuman measures taken by the Eritrean government against the Afar and the entire Eritrean people. If assistance can't reach the people in the coming few days, and weeks, the crisis will be irreversible and catastrophic!

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