



1. The Big Picture

Libya at crossroads as LNA expands in South

This week, the Libyan National Army (LNA) has continued to pursue its territorial ambitions in the South - peacefully expanding into Al-Feel oilfield and Qatrun - amid growing fears of a broader escalation in the West. In Tripoli, the absence of guarantees the LNA will limit its presence to the South is widening the cracks between a structurally weak Government of National Accord (GNA) headed by Fayez Sarraj and the Tripoli Protection Force (TPF) militia coalition.

On 21 Feb, Libyan National Army (LNA) brigades consolidated their hold over the entire city of Murzuq after heavy clashes with local Tebu resistance groups, including the Southern Protection Force (SPF), which had recently recaptured the city after an alleged LNA retreat. In addition, the LNA peacefully entered Al-Feel oil field, and more recently, Qatrun on 24 Feb.

A re-eruption of hostilities is possible given conflicting reports over Tebu and rebel units' positions across the area. Tebu tribesmen continue to be divided over their support for the LNA's offensive. Tebu resistance to the LNA could begin to grow, possibly supported by Haftar's rivals in the West. Separately, the GNA Western Military Region commander, Osama Juwaili's movements in the Qaryat, North-East of Ash Shwayrif, have raised the likelihood of tensions and direct confrontation with LNA units in the Jabal Al-Gharbi national district.

On the oil and gas front, a resumption of production and lifting of force majeure at Sharara, despite being highly-coveted by the LNA, is not guaranteed in the short term. On 25 Feb, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) Chairman, Mustafa Sanallah, stated conditions to reopen the field and resume production have not yet been met. Sanallah confirmed the field remains closed due to the "presence of a group of civilians, this armed militia, and some military people with them". This would represent a message to indicate the LNA's presence does

not equate to security and that there are remaining issues related to the presence of the Tuareg 30th Brigade. The statement could, however, prompt eastern-based authorities to accuse Sanallah of favouritism and bias.

In the capital city, unpredictability and tensions are high, highlighted by competition over key institutions and leadership change at the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA). A decision by Sarraj to appoint new figures at the LIA, including a member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), has sparked controversy with the TPF and would come amid unconfirmed reports of expected leadership change at the Tripoli-based Central Bank of Libya (CBL). Sarraj's decision will further contribute to allegations of unilateral decision-making, undermining his position while increasing the likelihood militias will fill the expanding anti-Islamist vacuum in Tripoli.

Politically, the LNA's campaign has made Haftar less likely to make concessions; a situation which does not allow Sarraj much room for manoeuvre. The LNA's territorial gains have replaced the search for a political settlement championed by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Uncertainty over the National Conference is highlighted by reports suggesting gunmen affiliated to a notorious Tripoli-based militia targeted the house of Mohamed Abani, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the upcoming National Conference in Tripoli's Khellat Al-Furjan area at approximately 1800hrs on 21 Feb.

KEY POINTS

- Controversial Sarraj LIA appointment
- NOC: Sharara to remain closed
- TPF VS Sarraj rivalry grows



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2. National Security Map

LNA negotiates entry in Al-Feel; consolidates hold over Murzuq after heavy clashes

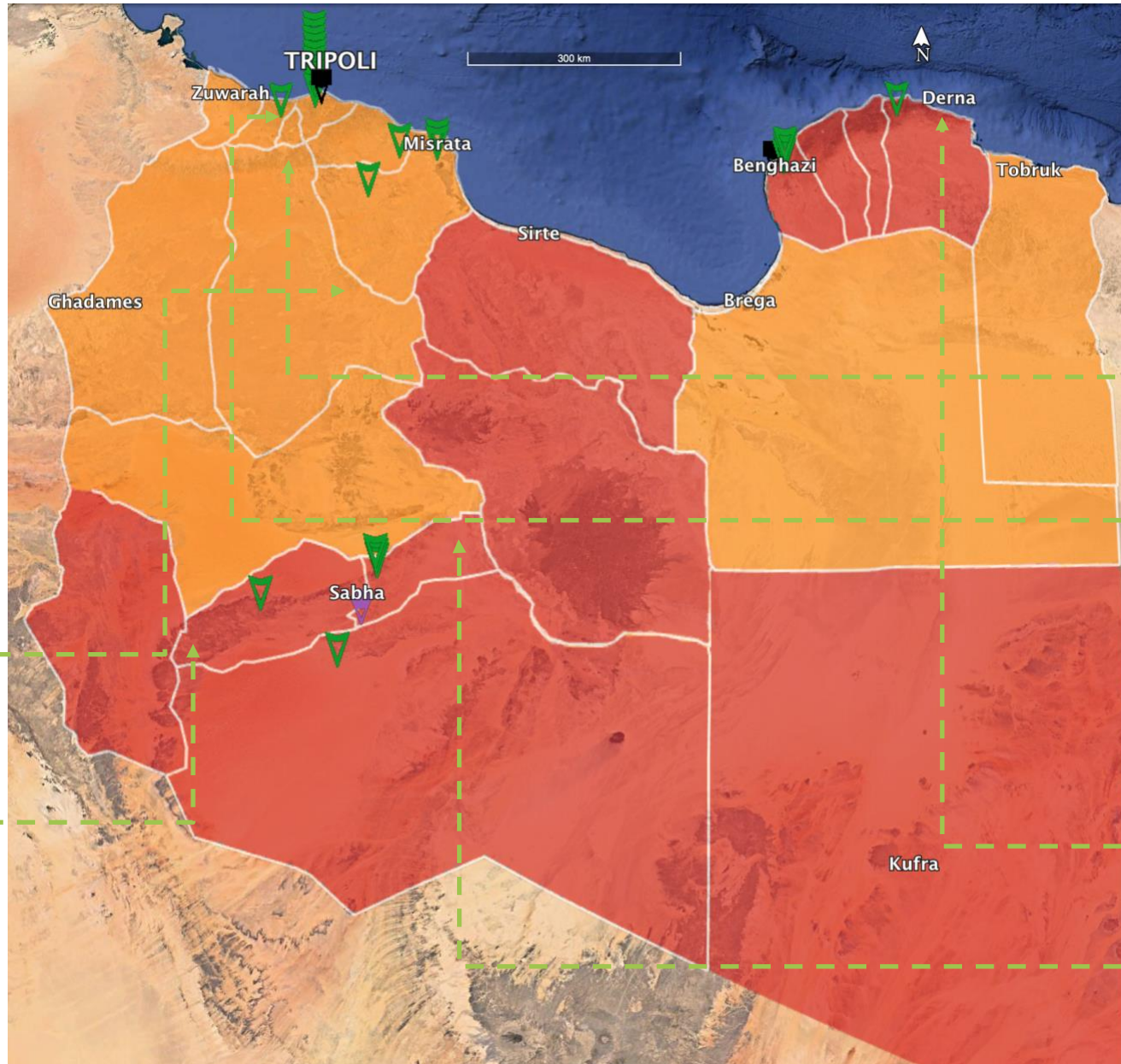
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

- ★ IED | VBIED
- ▼ Violent Clash
- Isolated Gunfire
- ▼ Other



Reports suggest an unidentified group attacked one of the stations of the Great Man-Made River of Jabal Al-Hasawna Sahl Jafara Water System and robbed four new wells and sabotaged electrical transformers. Attacks targeting the Great Man-Made River ceased for the past two months.

The 111th Brigade in Gharyan released a video statement in which it declared its support for the Libyan National Army (LNA) and praised its current military campaign in the South on 20 Feb. The video showed dozens of soldiers on foot dressed in military uniforms, in addition to multiple armed vehicles and tanks in the background.

Reports indicate tensions were high in Al-Zawiya city and western cities as the LNA push in the South continues to polarize groups. Unconfirmed reports suggest LNA-aligned Sabratah militias affiliated to Omar Abduljalil could move into Al-Zawiya. Meanwhile, rumours suggest unidentified armed groups from Zintan and Gharyan could also mobilize in Al-Zawiya.

On 20 Feb, the Libyan National Army (LNA) spokesperson, Ahmed Al-Mesmari, announced in his weekly press briefing that military units withdrew from Derna and a police force is now securing the city following its liberation.

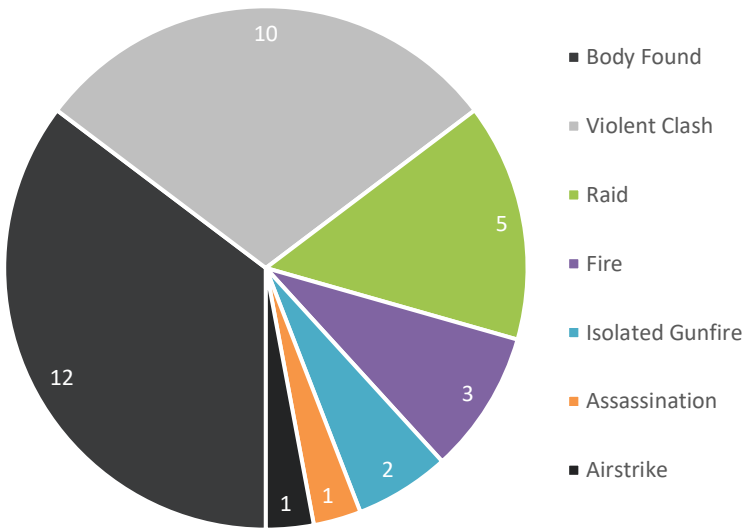
Reports suggest unidentified assailant(s) kidnapped an unconfirmed number of locals on the road between Jufra and Bawanis on 23 Feb.

Reports suggest 80 vehicles affiliated with the Government of National Accord (GNA) Western Military Region Commander Osama Juwaili entered Qaryat village, north-east of Ash Shwayrif on 22 Feb. A day later, another convoy was allegedly affiliated with Juwaili was travelling on desert roads near Bi'r al Ghanam and towards the cities of Ajaylat and Sabratah. There is no further information available.

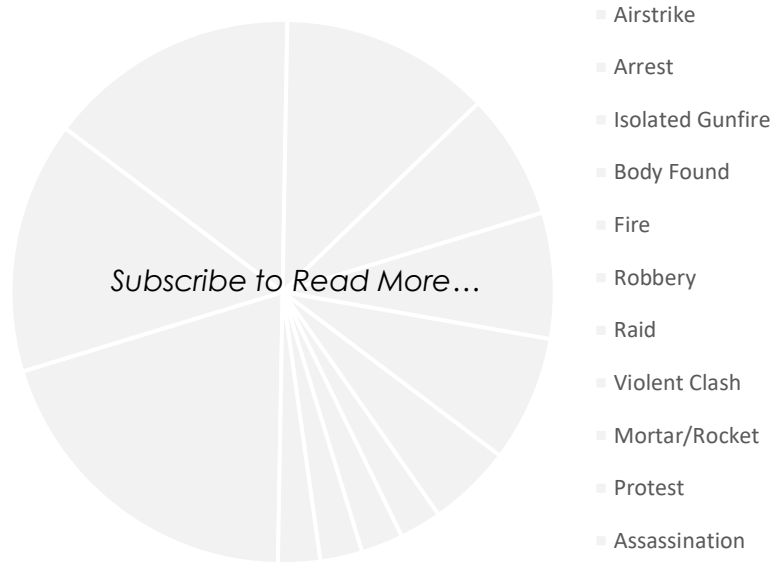
The Libyan National Army (LNA) negotiated its entry into Al-Feel oilfield on 21 Feb while production remained unaffected and stable at 75k barrels per day (bpd). Reports suggest the LNA negotiated its entry into the field after negotiations with Zintani forces who had been in charge of securing the field. In a separate development, the LNA announced it will allow flights operated by oil companies to resume to the southern oilfields. However, there are caveats and all aircraft are obliged to land at the Tamanhint airbase.

3. Nationwide Security Analysis Increase in recorded airstrikes in South; decrease in nationwide fatalities

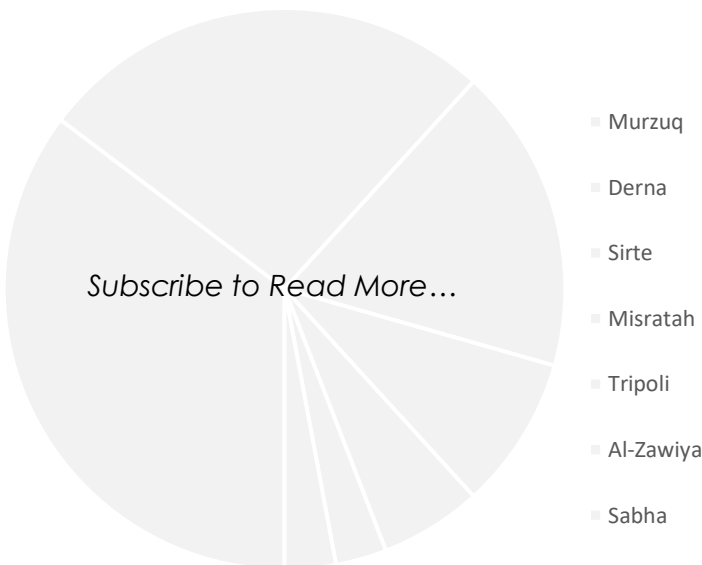
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



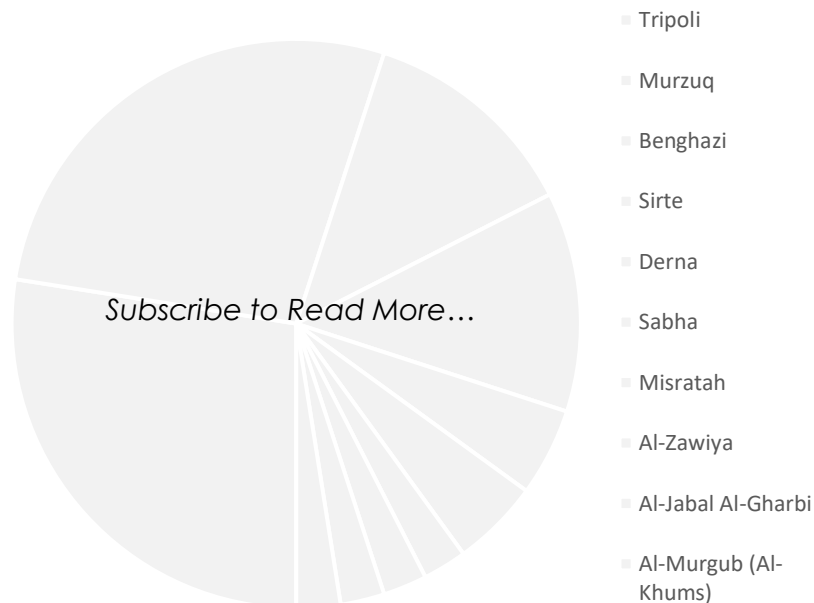
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



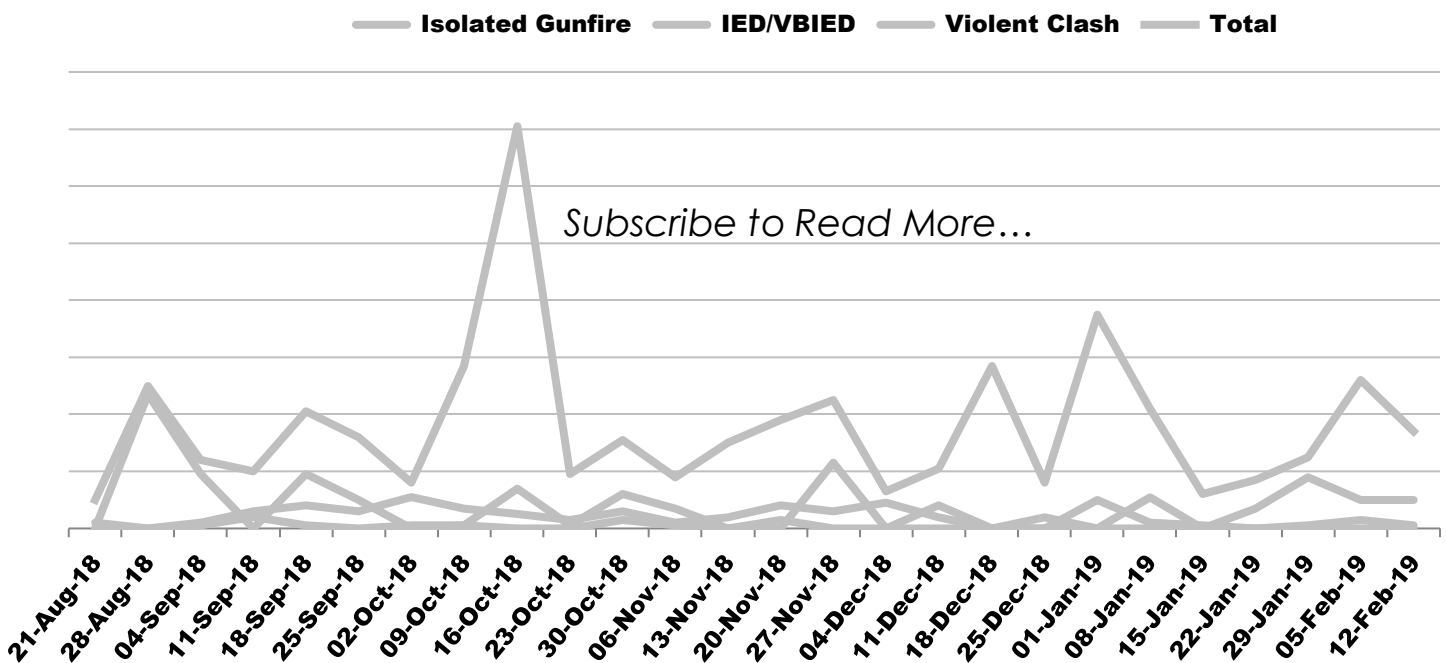
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



Nationwide incidents by national district (Past week)



Nationwide Fatalities by Type of Attack (Past 27 Weeks)



Data Analysis

WB recorded this week a total of 34 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 52 deaths reported last week and 25 the week before. Since the launch of the Libyan National Army's (LNA) military campaign in the South in Jan, WB continues to record the highest number of incidents in the capital city, followed by cities across the Southern region. This week, WB recorded a surge in LNA airstrikes targeting Chadian rebels and local rival groups in the South. Several security incidents were reported throughout the country, including 8 airstrikes, 6 arrests, 6 cases of isolated gunfire, 5 incidents of bodies found, 3 robberies, 3 raids, 2 violent clashes, 1 assassination and 1 carjacking.

In Western Libya, WB recorded a total of 15 incidents, including 11 incidents in the capital city, Tripoli. In Tripoli, locals closed off Janzour's main road near Tripoli's Jumhuriya Bank and erected dirt barricades while burning tires in response to the killing of a resident in the area in the afternoon on 16 Feb. Reports indicate the killed man is the nephew of a Fursan Janzour Battalion leader. Janzour's main road was reopened in the evening on 17 Feb. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, a man in his thirties was found killed in his farm in Tripoli's Bawabat Al-Jibs area, in the afternoon on 22 Feb. Initial reports indicate the man was a military officer of the former Gaddafi regime, though it remains unclear if the incident is tied to his affiliation. Beyond, in the wider Western region, unidentified assailants carjacked a grey 2011 KIA Optima on the road between Garabolli and Qasr Khair on 19 Feb. Further, a parked white Mitsubishi L200 pick-up vehicle was stolen under Al-Waddan Bridge in Tripoli's Al-Dahra in the morning on 18 Feb.

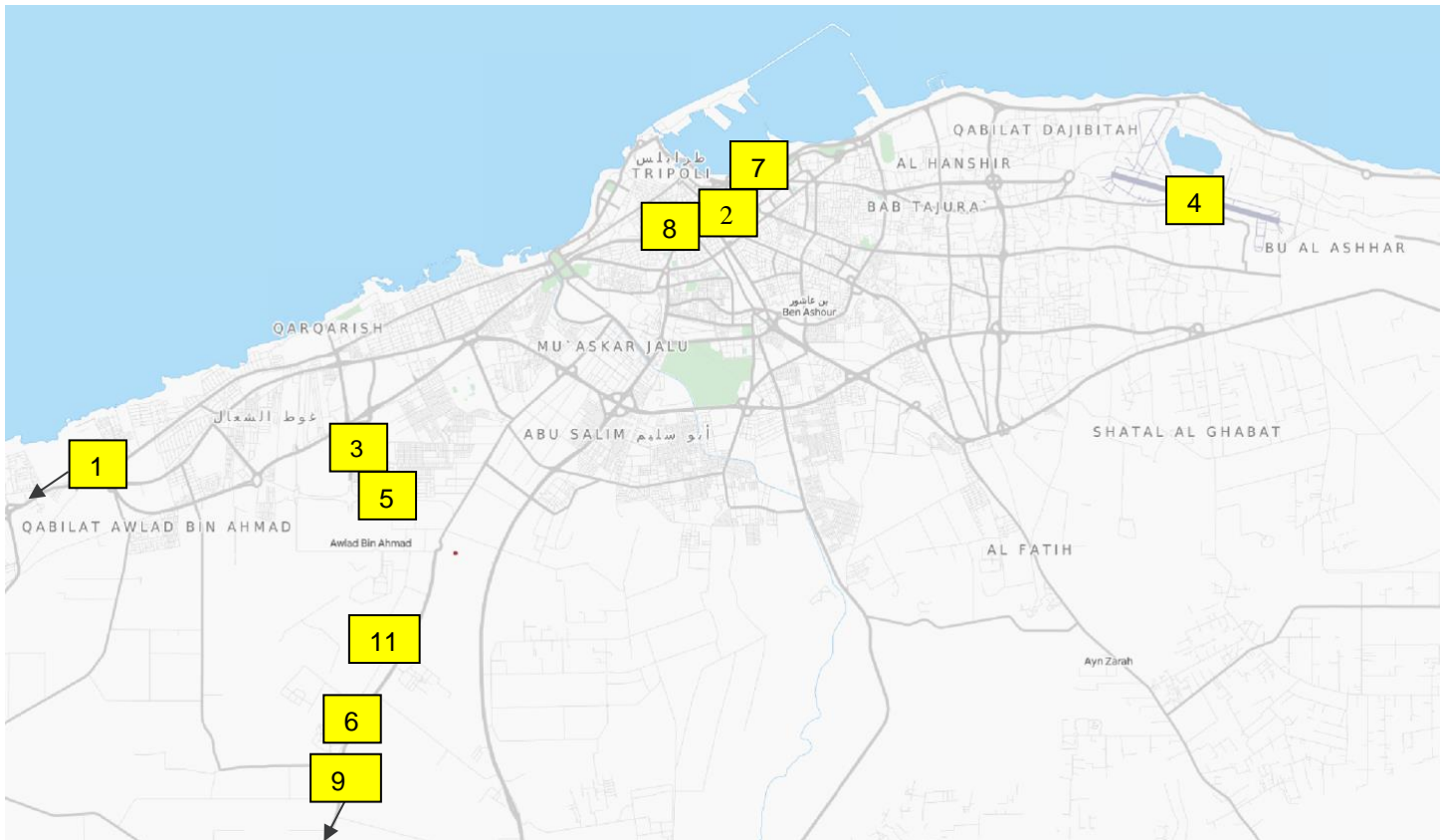
This week in Central Libya was marked by an unidentified group attacked one of the stations of the Great Man-Made River of Jabal Al-Hasawna Sahel Jafara Water System. The group robbed four new wells and sabotaged electrical transformers. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) found two unidentified bodies, likely belonging to illegal migrants, in Sirte's Al-Arbain area on 18 Feb.

Turning to southern Libya, heavy clashes erupted between the Libyan National Army (LNA) and Tebu armed groups after the LNA's 73 infantry Brigade entered Murzuq from the East on 20 Feb. Additionally, the LNA's Air Force (LAF) conducted approximately six airstrikes in Murzuq and towards the Chadian border on 20 Feb. There are reports of the clashes resulting in 20 fatalities on the LNA side. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, reports suggest members of the Central Security Service killed a Sabha Security Directorate member after he refused to remove his vehicle's tinted glass resulting in an exchange of gunfire in Sabha's Al-Gurda area on 18 Feb.

In Eastern Libya, an armed group attacked Benghazi's Municipal Guard HQ resulting in the injury of a guard on 19 Feb. Meanwhile, indiscriminate gunfire injured a 7-year-old boy in Benghazi's Al-Leithi area on 23 Feb.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Two videos circulate of factions declaring support for LNA in Tripoli



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (17 Feb) Locals block Janzour main rd; Fursan Janzour BN relative killed
2. (18 Feb) Parked vehicle stolen in Al-Dahra
3. (19 Feb) Road in front of Tobacco Factory blocked due to party
4. (19 Feb) Military aircraft flying over Tripoli; reportedly departed from MJI
5. (19 Feb) Purported footage of LNA 155 soldiers in Edraiby
6. (20 Feb) 50 trucks enter 7 April Camp; secured by Zintan & Nawasi militias
7. (20 Feb) Tajouri in reported meeting with Eastern CBL's Shokry
8. (21 Feb) Parked vehicle stolen in front of Ali Wareith High School
9. (21 Feb) Zintani militia security alert at CP in Al-Kreymiya
10. (22 Feb) Video of "20/20 Tareq Ben Ziad" declaring support for LNA
11. (22 Feb) Former regime military officer found killed in farm

50 trucks enter 7 April Camp

Reports suggest 50 trucks loaded with approximately 50 unknown shipping containers were travelling on Tripoli's Gorji Road subsequently resulting in traffic congestion across Tripoli, including the highway, at approximately 1800hrs on 20 Feb. Initial reports indicate the trucks travelled towards the 7 April Camp in Al-Kreymiya and were secured by Zintan and Nawasi militias. Sources confirmed 50 trucks entered the 7 April Camp under the control of Emad Trabelsi's Zintan militias. The incident could be linked to unconfirmed reports of a large amount of military equipment transported via container trucks based on an order from the Government of National Accord (GNA) to Western military region forces.

Videos declaring support for LNA in Tripoli

A video circulated across social media outlets on 19 Feb shows four purported Libyan National Army (LNA) 155 Brigade soldiers in uniform declaring their support for the LNA while standing on a bridge in Tripoli's Edraiby area. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, a video circulated across social media outlets purportedly showing six masked men, calling themselves "20/20 Tarek Ben Ziad" from Tripoli, declaring their support for the LNA and Haftar on 22 Feb. There have been multiple videos emerging recently where groups of individuals, usually in small numbers, pledge allegiance to the LNA in Tripoli and across Western towns. Such videos would come amid growing threats

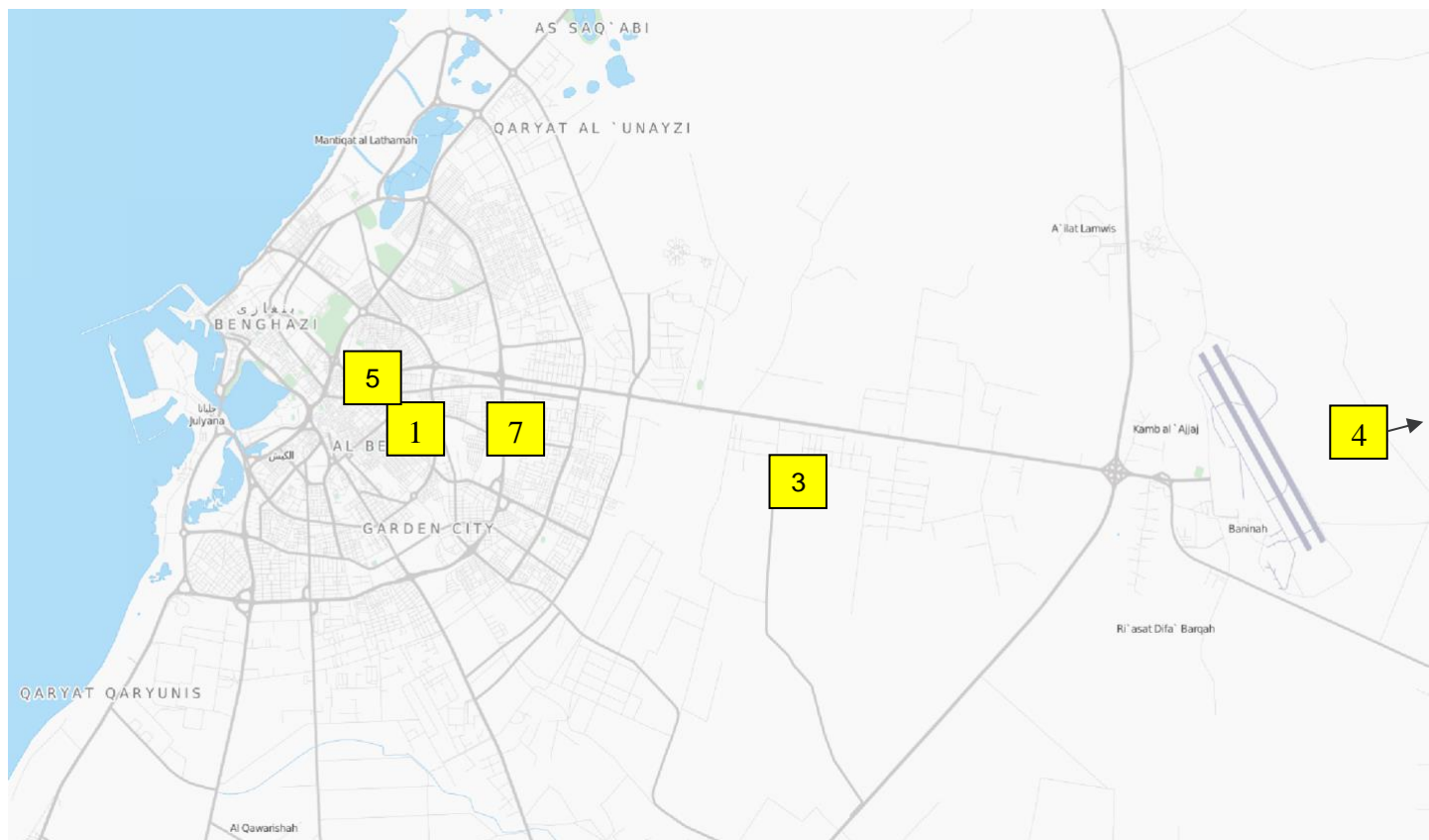
of an LNA intervention and a heightened security environment among Tripoli militias.

TPF criticize Serraj; Tajouri meets CBL Shokry

On 23 Feb, the Tripoli Protection Force (TPF) issued a statement criticising the Presidential Council (PC) head Fayez Al-Serraj's appointment of two figures in the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA). The two figures nominated are the Deputy Chairman of the LIA's Board of Directors, Yusuf Al-Mabrouk, who would "exercise full authorities of the chairman in his absence", whilst Mustafa Ali was appointed as a board member. According to reports, Mabrouk is Al-Serraj's office manager, whilst Mustafa Ali is a Muslim Brotherhood (MB) affiliate who also holds a senior position in the Central Bank of Libya (CBL). Overall, the TPF's latest statement stands as the third development in which it asserts that it will not comply with the PC and its decisions unless issued by the consensus of its nine members and would highlight growing tensions between the two sides. In a separate development, The Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) head, Haithem Tajouri, reportedly met with the House of Representatives (HoR) elected Central Bank of Libya (CBL) governor, Mohamed Shoukry, in Tripoli's Radisson Blu Hotel on 20 Feb. The meeting would come amid ridicule targeting the Tripoli-based CBL governor Sadiq Al-Kabir, circulated across social media outlets. There is a possibility the LNA's offensive in the South will prompt factions in Tripoli, who are gradually becoming anti-islamist, to pursue the eastern objective of replacing Al-Kabir, especially amid growing threats of an LNA intervention towards Tripoli.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

Armed group attacks Municipal Guard HQ; Salame holds talks with Haftar



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (17 Feb) Indiscriminate gunfire in Burzghaybah; injury
2. (18 Feb) Salame meets with Haftar & local council officials
3. (19 Feb) Armed group attacks Municipal Guard HQ; injury
4. (19 Feb) Haftar meets with new Italian Ambassador in Rajmah
5. (21 Feb) Benghazi's Security Directorate arrests drug dealer
6. (23 Feb) CID force arrives in Benghazi from Derna
7. (23 Feb) Indiscriminate gunfire in Al-Leithi; 7-year-old boy injured

Municipal Guard HQ attacked

Local reports suggest an armed group attacked Benghazi's Municipal Guard HQ resulting in the injury of a guard on 19 Feb. On its official Facebook page, the Municipal Council's Media Office stated that one of the attackers was dressed in military uniform and opened fire on the guards resulting in the injury of Ali Al-Tajouri who suffered three gunshot wounds. Reports suggest the attack could be in retaliation for a joint patrol carried out by municipal guards in which they closed down multiple shops that violated health standards, suggesting the attackers could be the shop owners.

Indiscriminate gunfire

Local reports from 17 Feb suggest indiscriminate gunfire resulted in the injury of a 17-year-old male in Benghazi's Buzghaybah area. The victim was reportedly wounded by shrapnel from a random bullet to his leg as he passed through an area witnessing a social occasion. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, local reports suggest indiscriminate gunfire resulted in the injury of a 7-year-old boy in front of Al-Ouzai Mosque in Benghazi's Al-Leithi area on 23 Feb.

UNSMIL head holds talks with Haftar

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Head, Ghassan Salame, arrived in Benghazi to hold talks with the Libyan National Army (LNA) head Khalifa Haftar, and other local officials on 18 Feb. The UNSMIL confirmed the visit on its official Twitter page, reporting that Salame met with Haftar and discussed developments in the South, the humanitarian situation in Derna, and Libya's overall political situation, including preparations for the upcoming Libyan National Conference. Additionally, Salame met with Benghazi's municipality and local representatives, in which he updated the latter on the reopening of the UN office in Benghazi and matters of cooperation. Beyond this, Salame received several House of Representatives (HoR) members to discuss pushing forward the country's political process. Salame's visit to Benghazi and subsequent meetings with the city's high-level officials follows a campaign opposed to him in the East, particularly in Benghazi, with recent protests calling for his replacement, in addition to HoR members denouncing his remarks on the LNA's military campaign in the South.

6. What's next

Pro-Gaddafi elements in West to shift balance in favour/against LNA

POLITICAL FORECAST

On the political scene, there have been no major developments as attention is now focused on Haftar's military offensive in the South rather than political negotiations. Thus far, a negotiated settlement seems unlikely as the potential for Haftar to concede has diminished; the LNA's southern offensive could have far-reaching political consequences. Analysts suggest recent developments have significantly undermined political efforts pursued by the UNSMIL, which casts doubt on the potential for the National Conference to achieve major breakthroughs. In the West, Gaddafi supporters could shift the balance in favour or against the LNA. The Head of the High Council of State (HCS) Khaled Meshri's comments against Gaddafi supporters will likely put further strain on the GNA given the Serraj-Meshri ties. Meanwhile, fears of an LNA intervention in the West are also highlighted by the growing anti-Madkhali voices, equating a pro-Haftar stance with support for dictatorship. On the international front, US President Donald Trump, confirmed in a notice to Congress, the continuation of the state of national emergency with respect to Libya for a year starting 25 Feb 2019. Trump noted "Libya continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States". The US government declared the state of national emergency in Feb 2011 as per Executive Order 13566.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

Wolfram Lacher, in his latest analysis of the situation in Libya's South, discusses the importance of the Tebu stance in relation to Haftar's military campaign. 'Tebu leaders were also wary of the narrative accompanying Haftar's operations in the south, which emphasised the aim of fighting "Chadian gangs". Although Chadian and Sudanese combatants have indeed become a major source of insecurity in the south over the past years, "Chadian gangs" had already been serving as code language for Tebu fighters – both Libyan and Chadian – in the Sabha conflicts since 2012. Clearly, this choice of language was not innocent, given that Haftar has himself been Libya's single largest employer of Chadian and Sudanese fighters. Haftar's strategy for taking over Sabha therefore alienated even many Tebu who had previously been supportive or ambivalent towards him. Tebu forces have, to date, offered tenacious resistance to the attempts of Haftar's troops at moving south to Murzuq. It currently remains unclear whether Haftar can exploit divisions among the Tebu to overcome such opposition. If he gains the support of powerful Tebu commanders, his opponents and associated Chadian combatants may be forced to seek a way out, with possible repercussions for neighbouring Chad and Niger. If, on the contrary, the current rift cements along ethnic lines, this would increase the intensity of the conflict and block Haftar's moves towards the southern borders. Haftar's opponents in western Libya could support Tebu resistance; Misratan commanders, for example, are discussing a move into the Jufra region in central Libya to cut off Haftar's supply lines to the south. A move on Jufra, in turn, would carry risks of a broader escalation."

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SECURITY FORECAST

In Tripoli, tensions between Sarraj and the Tripoli Protection Force (TPF) are at their highest, corroborating WB's assessment in the past weekly report. While thus far tensions have been limited to politically-charged statements, TPF militias could begin to physically challenge the GNA, including by carrying out politically-motivated arrests and/or attacks targeting key figures. Militias could accuse officials of support for the Al-Kaniat militia of Tarhunah. There is a possibility of skirmishes at Tripoli International Airport (TIP) given the latest reports that the GNA MoI has backed down on its decision to assign Al-Kaniat to secure the airport, nominating instead a group formed by the MoI. West of Tripoli, tensions will continue to escalate between pro/anti LNA groups, amid unconfirmed reports LNA-aligned Sabratah militias affiliated to Omar Abduljalil could move into Al-Zawiya. Meanwhile, rumours suggest unidentified armed groups from Zintan and Gharyan could also mobilize in Al-Zawiya. An attack by the Islamic State (IS) group against LNA units in the South and/or GNA positions in the West remains possible. In the central areas, there is a threat of tensions and a direct confrontation with LNA units in the Jabal Al-Gharbi national district. In the South, the LNA's operations to seize remaining positions further South towards the Chadian border will likely be swift, though clashes with Tebu opposition groups are likely.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

Writing for the *Atlantic Council*, the author Karim Mezran, discusses how diverged local interests combined with increased foreign interference, draw a pessimistic outlook for Libya. "France's interest in the government of Fayed al-Serraj, officially recognized by the United Nations and the international community, is therefore to encourage acceptance of General Haftar's role and position in the process of national reconciliation. France and the political leadership in Tripoli are well aware, however, of the general's real political ambitions, in which he aims for full and absolute control of national politics - making the process of national reconciliation impossible. It is therefore clear that the positions and interests of Italy and France are in total opposition to each other. For Italy, Libya assumes a connotation of strategic and vital importance from the viewpoint of energy and security policy; for France, the country represents a mere potential opportunity. While the position of Fayed al-Serraj is judged as structurally weak—a consequence of the absence of a direct military capacity under the command of the authorities of the GNA of Tripoli and the contextual necessity of resorting to the protection of the militias present on the territory of Tripolitania—General Haftar is widely recognized by the international community as an expression of a cohesive and less conflictual military system. The evolutionary scenario of the current crisis, therefore, evokes a pessimistic outlook regarding the possibility of a peaceful solution of the contrasting local political and military interests, above all, in the light of the growing foreign interference and the wider dimension of the interests behind it, from Europe to the Persian Gulf."

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