

1. The Big Picture

LNA reviews financing options; GNA eyes offensive Ops.

This week, Libyan National Army (LNA) forces led by Khalifa Haftar prioritized a northward push on the Khallat Al-Furjan and Hadba Al-Mashro fronts, in contrast to last week's focus on Al-Aziziyah and Al-Swani in Tripoli's South-West. Despite this renewed focus, the LNA's on-the-ground advances remain limited and armed clashes have only occasionally reached southern areas of Salah Al-Dein. It appears the LNA placed greater emphasis on reorganizing forces across frontlines this week.

For their part, Government of National Accord (GNA) forces continue to claim LNA advances have been repelled while hinting at potential upcoming offensive operations simultaneously targeting LNA forces in Tarhunah, Al-Wattiyah airbase, and Al-Jufra. LNA forces have, however, consistently maintained control over strategic positions such as the Yarmouk Camp, and are likely intent on seizing additional positions to consolidate their posture south of the capital in the short term.

While the GNA's posture is currently difficult to ascertain, reports suggest forces aligned to the Tripoli government suffered setbacks recently. The LNA's recurrent airstrikes targeting Tripoli, Misrata, and Sirte positions, coupled with growing intra-GNA tensions, have all limited the GNA's reach. Unconfirmed reports even allege the GNA increased its reliance on Chadian mercenaries across frontlines further South of Tripoli, including Al-Aziziyah, due to a lack of manpower. In neighbouring Tunisia, pro-GNA wounded fighters complained in a videoed statement of the treatment they were receiving, claiming this has had an impact on their morale. With this in mind, the GNA will find it hard to shift from its current defensive posture. If reports that armed groups in Tripoli have been weakened are proven true, pro-GNA Misrata groups are unlikely to support an offensive on LNA positions as this would create a vacuum in Tripoli, paving the way for Haftar's forces to make a concerted push.

The LNA's air campaign this week serves as a striking example of the fact Haftar's forces are attempting to buy time as they wait for more splits to emerge within the GNA camp. The LNA Air Force's (LAAF) targeting of Mitiga International Airport (MJI) was a direct challenge given it came closely after a visit by the United Nations Support

Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) head, Ghassan Salame, who emphasized the civilian nature of the airport.

Regardless of the LNA's manoeuvres, it continues to face challenges that could undermine its ability to deliver a decisive blow to GNA forces. Tactics on the ground have now somewhat lost relevance as the prospect of a decisive military victory continues to shrink. The LNA's challenges are more related to its ability to finance the war effort. Recent reports have outlined renewed attempts to appropriate public funds in the East, which some analysts attributed to significant financial issues. In further evidence of the overall focus on the LNA's financing options, a meeting took place between the House of Representatives (HoR) head, Aguila Saleh, the Interim Government PM, Abdullah Al-Thinni, the HoR's National Defense and Security Committee chairman, Talal Al-Maihoub, the LNA's chief of staff (CoS), Abdelrazak Al-Nathouri and the Eastern-based Central Bank of Libya (CBL), Ali Al-Hibri, in Al-Bayda on 30 Oct. The meeting, which discussed ways of supporting the LNA's war effort, was also attended by Aoun Al Ferjani, considered Haftar's right-hand. These financial issues were further highlighted by a Reuters report documenting a growing debt and reliance by eastern authorities on shipments of banknotes printed in Russia, especially after Haftar's offensive. Of note, in a decree dated 22 Oct, the LNA increased the salaries of soldiers and officers between 25% to 100%.

Separately, on the counterterrorism front, the Islamic State's (IS) Libya province is expected to renew its allegiance to the group's global new leader, Abu Ibrahim Al-Hashimi Al-Qurashi, in the aftermath of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi's death. The group in Libya now comprises less than 150 militants and suffered heavy setbacks after a wave of US Africa Command (AFRICOM) airstrikes. Given that senior IS Libya figures died in these airstrikes, a new leader is also expected to emerge for the group in Libya as part of this allegiance renewal.

KEY POINTS

- LNA reorganizes forces across frontlines
- LNA air campaign targets Mitiga & GNA Mol HQ
- Reported LNA financing issues



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2. National Security Map

LNA airstrikes target Misrata & Sirte; IS militants establish CP south of Sirte

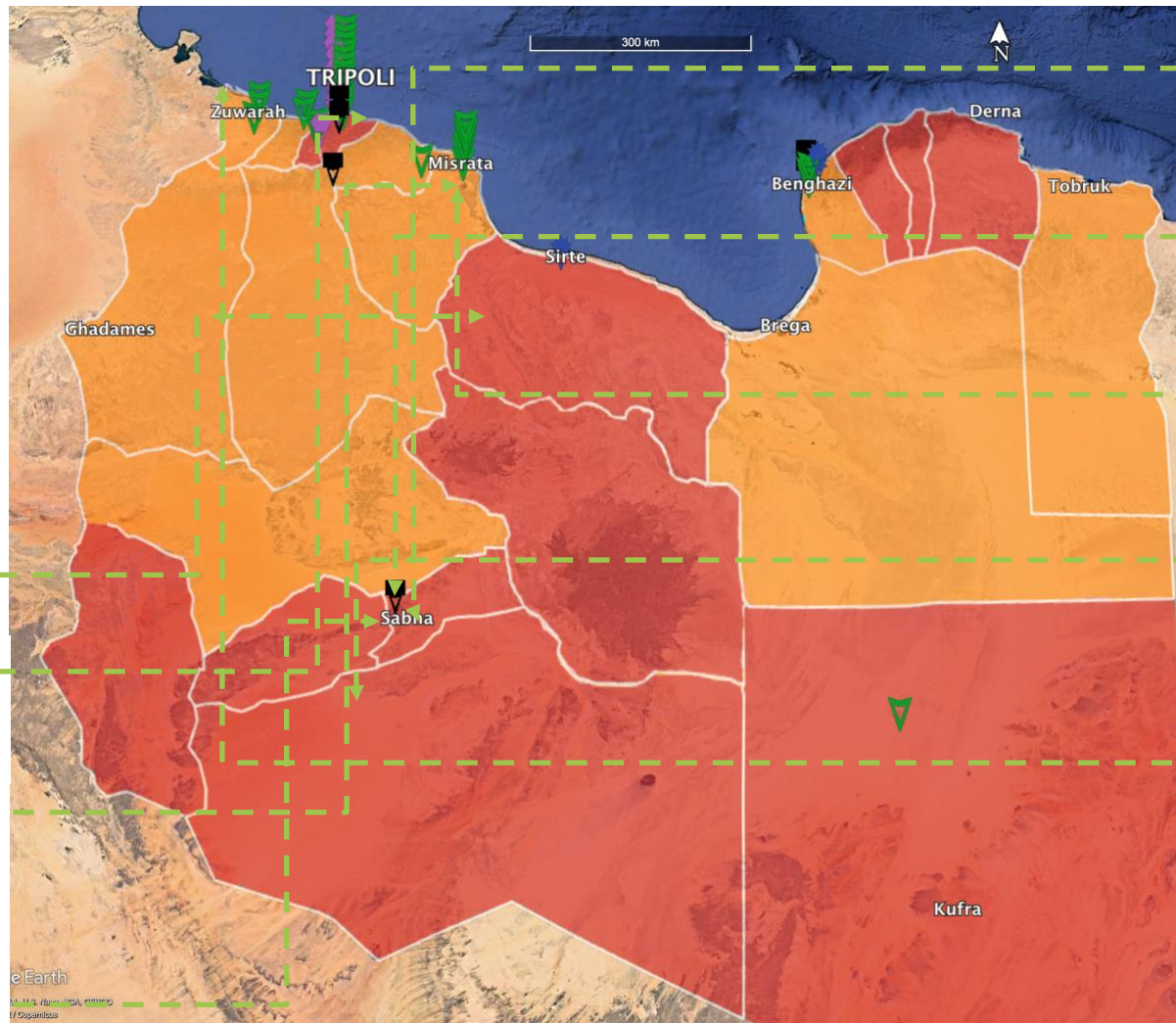
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

- ▲ IED | VBIED
- ◆ Violent Clash
- ▼ Isolated Gunfire
- ▽ Other



A fake checkpoint (CP) was established between Abu Nujaym and Zamzam on 29 Oct. Initial reports indicate the CP was manned by Islamic State (IS) militants.

Reports indicate Misrata forces killed a local man from Tarhunah at a checkpoint in Garaboli's Rashidat area in the morning on 30 Oct. There is no further information available.

The LNA spokesman, Ahmed Al-Mesmari, reported the LNA Air Force (LAAF) conducted airstrikes targeting facilities used to store unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and missiles at Misrata's Aviation College between 2100hrs-2200hrs on 30 Oct.

WB sources reported unidentified assailants driving a Hyundai Verna with tinted windows and no license plate killed a young man in Sabha's Al-Nasriya area on 01 Nov.

Sources reported LNA units arrested a sleeper cell consisting of Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (BRSC) members in Wadi Al-Bawanis, located in the Sabha district, on 31 Oct. It remains unclear if the members were planning an attack against local LNA units.

WB sources reported two assailants attacked a security CP in front of Sabha Medical Centre resulting in a brief exchange of gunfire at approximately 2130hrs on 02 Nov. Sources reported the security forces repelled the assault and killed the attackers.

The LAAF conducted an airstrike targeting GNA-affiliated forces on the outskirts of Sirte at approximately 0300hrs on 02 Nov. Reports suggest the airstrike targeted Misrata forces.

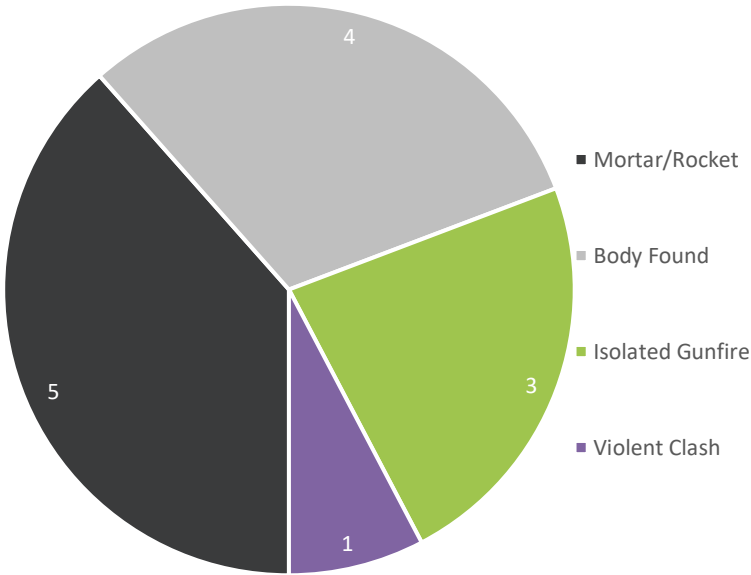
According to the LAAF moral guidance commander, Salahidin Al-Darsi, Khalifa Haftar ordered the Southern Military Zone commander to "liberate" Murzuq from terrorism and return internally displaced people (IDPs) within ten days on 30 Oct.

The Libyan-Tunisian Ras Ajdir border crossing remains closed as of the morning of 03 Nov, with the exception of ambulances and travellers crossing back into their home countries. As a result, sources reported long queues of up to 10 hours at the alternative crossing of Dehiba-Wazen.

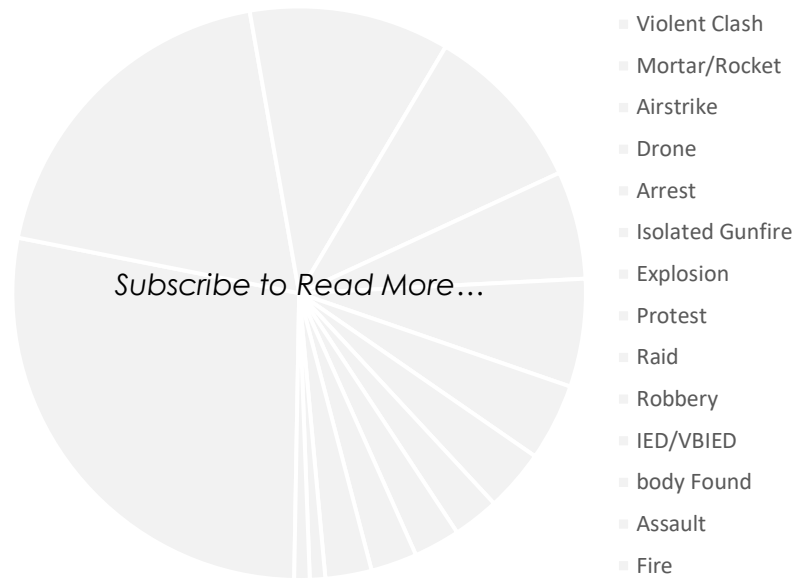
A video surfaced of kidnapped Romanian national, Valentin Laurentiu Puscasu, abducted by an unidentified armed group along with his Libyan colleague, Ashraf Msallam, from the Sharara oil field on 14 Jul 2018. The video, dated 30 Oct 2018, was allegedly sent by the kidnappers to Valentin's family to exert pressure on the Romanian government to meet their demands. Valentin's fate remains unknown.

3. Nationwide Security Analysis Indiscriminate shelling continues to result in civilian casualties across Tripoli

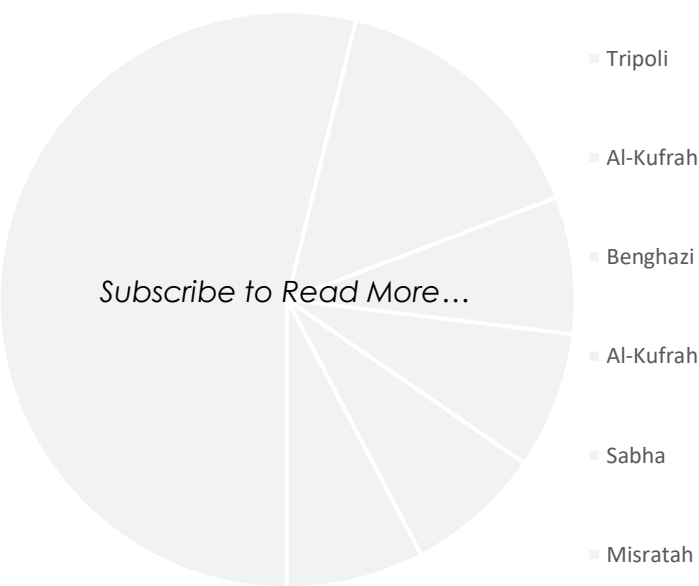
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



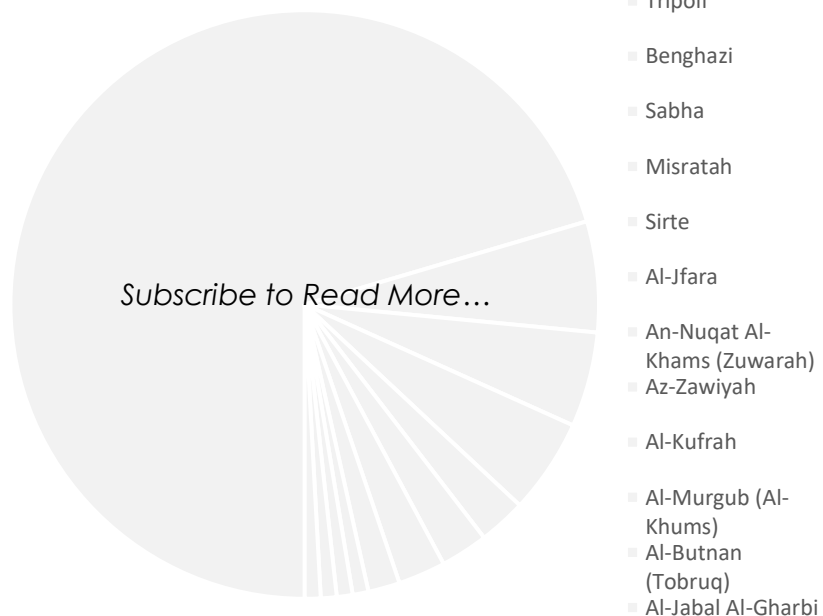
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



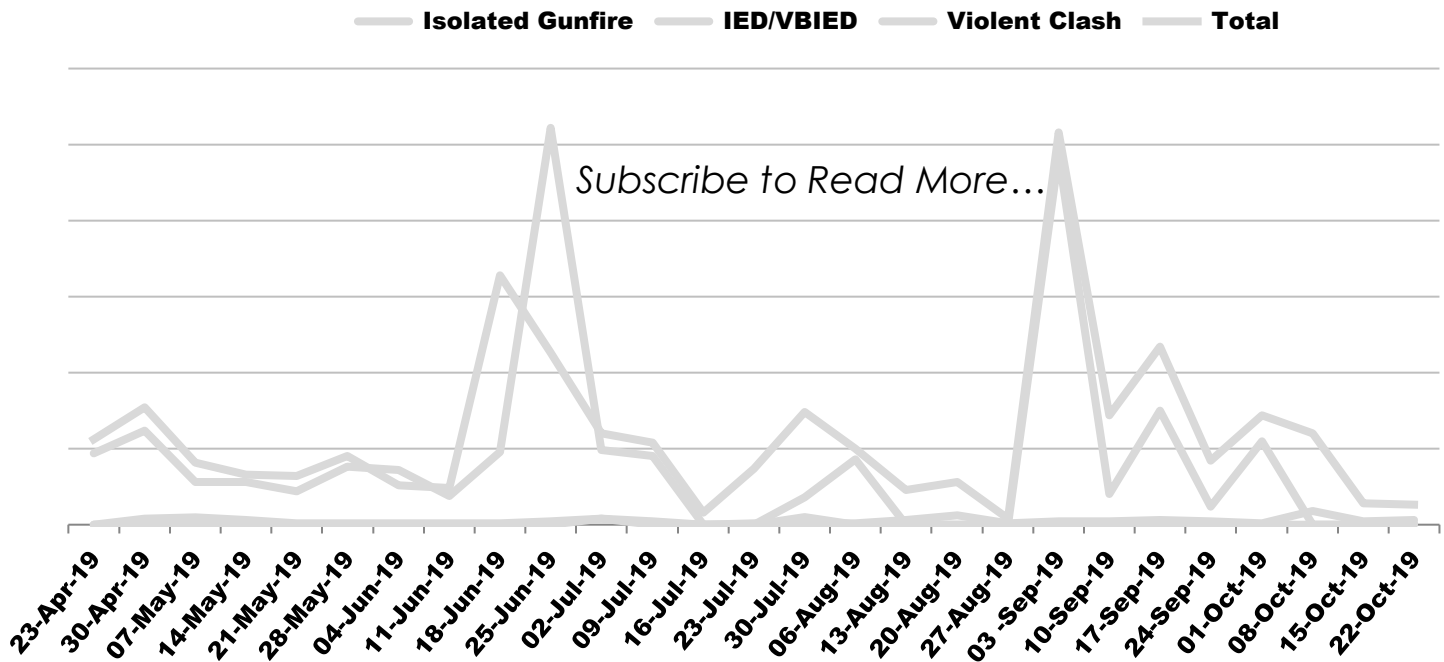
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



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 13 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 14 deaths reported last week and 60 the week before. The total number of nationwide fatalities would likely be significantly higher if a reliable casualty toll of the ongoing clashes in the Western region was available. Of note, both Libyan National Army (LNA) and Government of National Accord (GNA) forces continue to claim inflicting casualties without providing a specific figure. This week, mortar/rocket shelling incidents resulted in five civilian casualties in Tripoli. Violent clashes, mortar/rocket shelling incidents and airstrikes continue to dominate the overall security environment in the Western region as clashes protract. Meanwhile, sounds of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were heard across various Libyan cities this week, whilst protests calling for salary increases and the resignation of the GNA's Education Minister continued across the country. Similar to previous weeks, the highest number of security incidents and subsequent fatalities were recorded in the Tripoli district, followed by Benghazi and Sabha, with the latter witnessing a noticeable surge in sporadic security incidents over the reporting period. Several security incidents were recorded throughout the country including 32 violent clashes, 22 mortar/rocket shelling incidents, 13 airstrikes, 11 UAV reports, 7 arrests, 7 cases of isolated gunfire, 5 explosions, 4 protests, 4 raids, 4 robberies, 4 separate cases of bodies found, 3 IED/VBIED removed, 1 assault and 1 fire.

In Western Libya, WB recorded a total of 97 incidents, including 81 in Tripoli, marking a relative decrease in the overall number of security incidents recorded in the region. In the Tripoli district, WB sources reported members of a criminal gang stole three parked vehicles from the parking lot of the Whole Sale Pharmacies in the Edraiby area at approximately 1230hrs on 29 Oct. Separately, sources reported a White Hyundai Accent was stolen in front of a house in the Janzur area in the morning on 29 Oct. Meanwhile, at approximately 1800hrs on 27 Oct, WB sources reported locals broke into a school in the Gharghour area and assaulted the internationally displaced persons (IDPs) inhabiting the school to evict them in order for their children to return to their school. Beyond this, sources reported a traffic accident between a local driving a Hyundai Verna and unidentified armed men, believed to be GNA militiamen involved in the current clashes, in the Ain Zara area. Following the incident, the local was shot and detained. His whereabouts remain unknown. In the wider West, sources reported gunmen manning a checkpoint in the Ghot Al-Reih area, South of Gharyan, opened fire on a civilian vehicle resulting in the death of a man and the injury of his wife in the morning on 26 Oct. Local reports suggest the driver was asked to stop at the CP, though he suffered from hearing issues and turned his vehicle away prompting the gunmen to open fire on his vehicle as he fled.

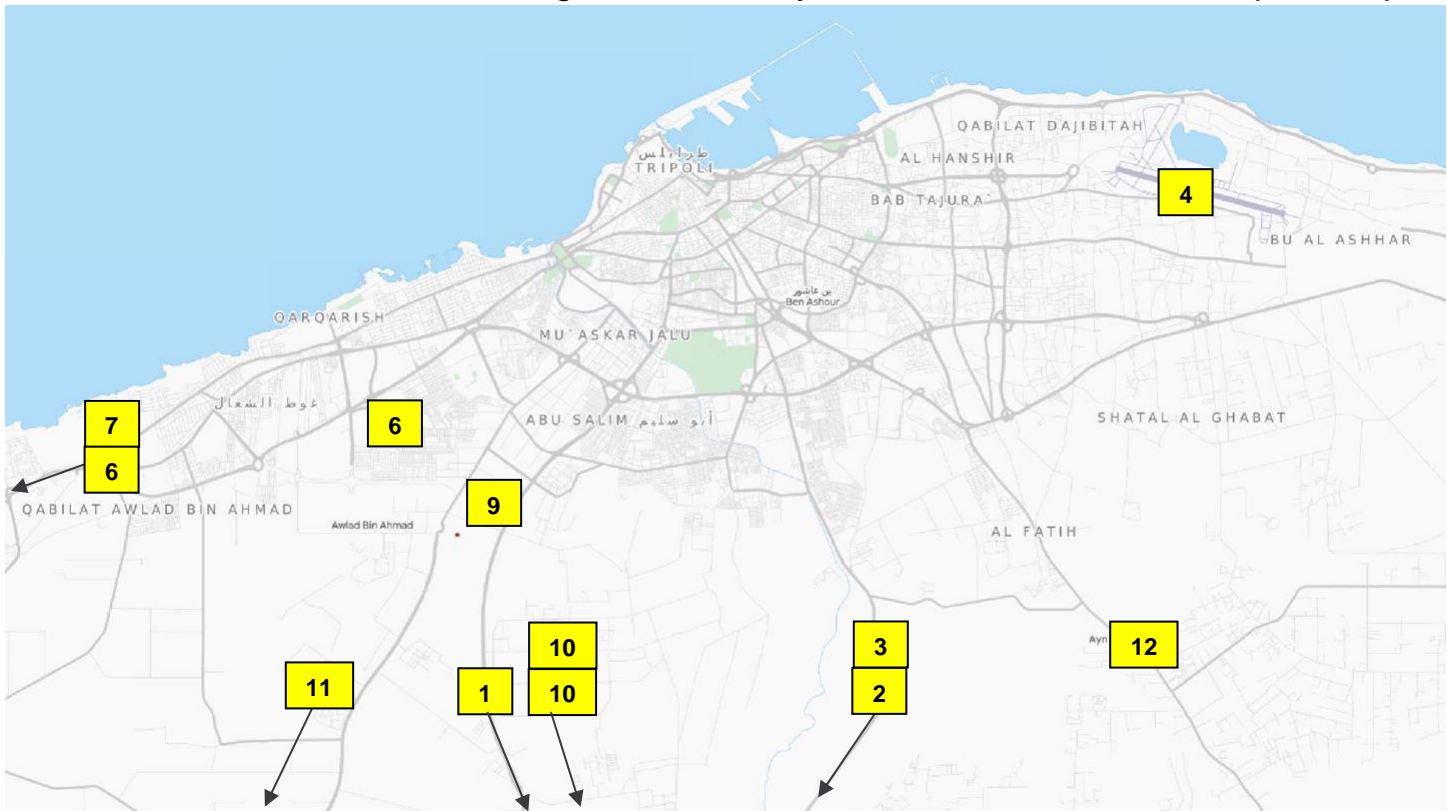
In the central region, Sirte's Protection Force (SPF) arrested 14 Egyptian illegal migrants attempting to illegally cross into the country in a vegetable truck at Gate 17 of Sirte's Eastern entrance on 29 Oct. The truck reportedly came from Al-Bayda and was headed westward. Meanwhile, this week saw the reemergence of LNA airstrikes targeting the city, with an LNA airstrike targeting Sirte's outskirts recorded on 02 Nov.

Turning to the South, WB recorded 6 security incidents in the Sabha district, including 2 arrests, 1 protest, 1 raid, an isolated gunfire incident and an arrest. Reports indicate two bodies were found with gunshot wounds next to their vehicle on a sideroad in the Tazirbu area. The bodies reportedly belonged to locals. Separately, sources reported clashes in Sabha's Hai Al-Mehdiya area in the evening of 26 Oct. Initial reports indicate the LNA's 116 Battalion raided a drug hideout in the area, which led to clashes with a local militia affiliated with the Gdadfa tribe operating in the area. No casualties were recorded.

In the East, security incidents remained predominantly in Benghazi, though Musaid's General Directorate of Criminal Investigation arrested a criminal gang suspected of kidnapping illegal migrants for a ransom in return for their release on 29 Oct.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

LNA airstrikes target MJI five days after GNA announces airport reopening



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (27-28 Oct) LNA refutes GNA claims of advance on Al-Twaisha front
2. (27 Oct) Two men searched and robbed at fake CP in Wadi Al-Rabei
3. (28-29 Oct) GNA claim repelled LNA attempts to control Al-Yarmouk
4. (29 Oct) Unconfirmed: indiscriminate shelling targets MJI
5. (29 Oct) GNA announces reopening of MJI, flights to resume within 2 weeks
6. (29 Oct) Four parked vehicles stolen in two separate robberies
7. (31 Oct) LNA airstrike targets National Mobile Force HQ in Janzour
8. (31 Oct) MJI director: no date for resuming ops due to maintenance work
9. (01 Nov) LNA airstrike targets GNA Ministry of Interior; no casualties
10. (01 -02 Nov) LNA claims repelled GNA attempt to advance on Al-Kzerna & Wildlife fronts
11. (02 Nov) Gunfire heard during militia dispute in Al-Najila
12. (02 Nov) Militiamen shoot & detain local after traffic accident in Ain Zara

LNA airstrike targets MJI after airport reopens

WB sources reported five LNA airstrikes targeted Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport (MJI) at approximately 1305hrs on 03 Nov. WB sources confirmed the airstrikes targeted MJI's military section. Sources added that the airstrike was preceded by a meeting inside MJI earlier in the morning where it was agreed to resume domestic flights within a week, though international flights were delayed until Dec. LNA spox, Al-Mesmari, noted that facilities used to maintain unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and store ammunition were targeted and destroyed.

On 29 Oct, the GNA reopened MJI following a closure of approximately two months, with civilian flights due to fully resume within two weeks, according to the GNA's Minister of Transport, Milad Matoug. WB sources reported commercial companies have been informed to begin making plans to gradually resume operations at Mitiga within 10-14 days. Matoug added that the airport is free of any military activity, which was corroborated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) head, Ghassan Salame, who stated there is no excuse to target MJI after inspecting all parts of the airport. Salame added that the UNSMIL's presence will help reinforce the civilian nature of the airport in line with plans for the mission to open its own terminal at MJI that will also be used by diplomatic missions. Whilst the UNSMIL's presence was initially perceived as a guarantee against future LNA targeting, the latest airstrike corroborates WB's assessment that the LNA will seek to obstruct efforts to resume civilian flights and will continue targeting the airport.

IOM: 600 migrants depart detention centre

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) confirmed that 600 illegal migrants departed Abu Slim Detention Centre, expressing concerns over their safety. The development would come after Abu Slim residents reported an influx of illegal immigrants carrying their belongings on foot, which coincided with heavy artillery heard from Tripoli's city center. Meanwhile, an unidentified LNA official stated the release of the migrants is a GNA attempt to raise concerns among international organisations with the hope of exerting pressure on the LNA to accept a ceasefire in Tripoli. The LNA official stated that the illegal migrants would join the GNA's ranks to compensate for their recent losses in the clashes. Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated at least 200 of the migrants headed to a center for processing resettlement cases established in Tripoli.

Civilians robbed at fake CP

Gunmen dressed in civilian clothing established a fake checkpoint in the Wadi Al-Rabei area in the morning on 27 Oct. Sources reported the armed militants are nominally affiliated with GNA-aligned Misrata militias. The gunmen stopped and searched the two men, scrutinizing their mobile phones and stealing some cash. No further information.

6. What's next

GNA divisions to continue growing; possible offensive operations

POLITICAL FORECAST

Developments on the political front have been limited this week. The Berlin Process was overshadowed by local developments, relatively compared with the past two weeks. The High Council of State's (HCS) Khalid Al-Mishri presented an initiative to resolve the political deadlock. Despite initially looking promising, the proposal is unlikely to gain traction given it lists the withdrawal of LNA forces to pre-04 April positions as a condition. The initiative includes ending the transitional phase by terminating the mandate of the current political bodies, including the GNA, and holding elections within four months, as well as a ceasefire and no-fly zone across Libya. Meanwhile, debates over legitimacy took centre stage, especially after comments made by UNSMIL head Ghassan Salame, who corroborated publicly-held assumptions that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is divided between supporters of Haftar and countries that recognize the GNA's legitimacy but nevertheless support Haftar. Analysts suggest the framing of the political deadlock as a legitimacy crisis appeals to the silent majority and will likely gain traction over the next few weeks. Of particular importance, obtaining the buy-in of the pro-Gaddafi supporter base will be essential to any initiative. On the international front, the US Ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland, met with the GNA PM, Fayez Al-Serraj, in London on 03 Nov, to discuss ways to end the conflict that has now entered its seventh month. In the meeting, Norland reaffirmed his country's support for Libya's "sovereignty and territorial integrity" amid an increased involvement of external state actors and mercenaries in the conflict, as well as civilian casualties. Meanwhile, Norland stated that at Libya's request, the US Embassy is prepared to fully support a Libyan dialogue aimed at restoring security in Western Libya and promoting economic reforms. In addition, Norland stated that the protracted conflict undermines the US-Libya fight against terrorism and hinders prospects of economic growth in the country.

SECURITY FORECAST

Recorded military activity indicates LNA forces have temporarily halted efforts to advance towards Warshaffanah to lay siege to Tripoli from the Western flank, focusing instead on a push northward on the Khallat Al-Furjan and Hadba Al-Mashro fronts. In Tripoli, criminal activity, including carjackings, kidnappings and murders, are now more noticeable in the suburbs and around engagement areas. The continued closure of Mitiga airport is set to raise tensions within GNA ranks given it is considered one of the relatively safer evacuation routes out of Tripoli. In the event of a GNA capitulation, prominent pro-GNA militia leaders could be detained in Misrata by local groups, especially those affiliated with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) in the city. Ras Ajdair remains closed, but with reports suggesting it could reopen in the next few days. On the frontlines, Saad Al-Teira, a Derna Protection Force (DPF) commander, formerly Derna Mujahideen Shura Council (DMSC), was spotted fighting in GNA ranks. The development is yet to be confirmed, though it is the latest report to claim extremists are fighting in support of the GNA. Meanwhile, videos circulated across social media outlets purportedly showing hundreds of Sudanese fighters present in Al-Jufra. The video's authenticity is difficult to ascertain, though it would come amid reports suggesting Benghazi Defense Brigade (BDB) members backed by GNA forces are planning an attack on Al-Jufra Airbase. In addition, the reports indicate GNA forces are also planning to launch an attack on Tarhunah, whilst Chadian militants are allegedly preparing to raid Al-Watiyah Airbase. Similar threats have been made in the past but failed to materialize. Meanwhile, pockets of Islamic State (IS) militants continue to operate south of the Sirte district, as highlighted by reports of a fake CP established in the Abu Nujaym vicinity.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

In an op-ed published in UPI, retired Col. Wes Martin of the U.S. Army Military Police, argues Libya is often misunderstood and its importance can be overlooked. He writes "The United States and Western Europe have never had a proper understanding on working with the people of Libya. Both fail to realize modern Libyan history does not start with the fall of Moammar Gadhafi. It starts with Italian colonization in 1910, including the atrocities of Benito Mussolini's occupation forces. Despite over 20 percent of the Libyan population dying during the Fascist occupation, and their lands being captured, the Libyan people never surrendered. The problem is not just among Western leaders. While serving as the Army senior anti-terrorism officer in Iraq, I was amazed at how many U.S. military personnel and State Department employees had no understanding of the history, culture and environment that is the Middle East. This is especially true with Libya. All roads traversing North Africa on the Mediterranean coastline run through Libya. Throughout history, the territory has been invaded by ancient Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines and Fascist Italians. In every case, when the governments of the invaders eventually collapsed, there was still Libya." Col. Wes Martin further argues that by overlooking these dynamics, the US administration could risk enabling other major international players such as Russia and China in Libya.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

Aidan Lewis writing for *Reuters* explores the deadlock in the military confrontations between LNA and GNA forces on the outskirts of Tripoli. He writes "On the outskirts of Tripoli, days of silence are broken by bursts of heavy artillery fire. Fighters camped out for weeks in abandoned houses watch for movement on enemy lines. A drone buzzes overhead and strikes, causing brief panic. The nervy ebb and flow of the battle for Libya's capital shows no sign of changing soon." The article then quotes Osama Juwaili, the prominent GNA Western Military Region commander: "We hope this war ends today, but the political leadership clarified that for talks on a ceasefire the invader should return to where he came from". The article further explores the prospect of a political breakthrough: "Juweili said private military contractors from Russia had been killed in a recent, failed attempt to cut the road to Azaziya in southern Tripoli. Their journey into Libya and to the frontline by air and through Syria had been tracked, he added. An LNA spokesman denied the presence of Russian fighters in its ranks, and the use of any foreign aircraft. Haftar's forces have expressed confidence that they can still achieve a swift victory. Tripoli commanders counter that they have centralised their military operations, and could mobilise thousands of extra fighters if needed. If Haftar took Tripoli, "he would be left in charge of a raging insurgency and insurrection," said a senior U.S. diplomat. "I think even a number of his patrons have great concerns about what it would actually mean for him to 'win'." The path to political negotiations is unclear. An international conference on Libya is expected in Germany, though preparations have been slow and no date has been announced."

About Whispering Bell



Contact Whispering Bell at: +971-4-448-6690 or at ras@whisperingbell.com

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