



Weekly Libya .Xplored preview

January 05, 2018

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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Quality
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Management
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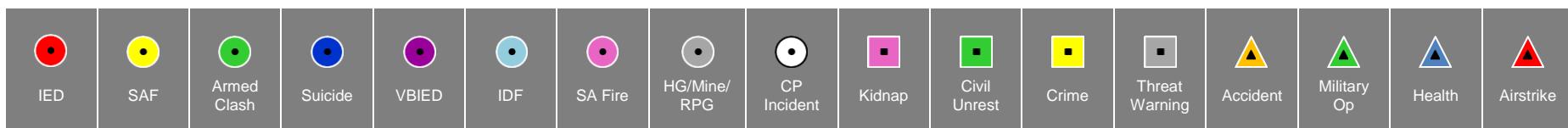
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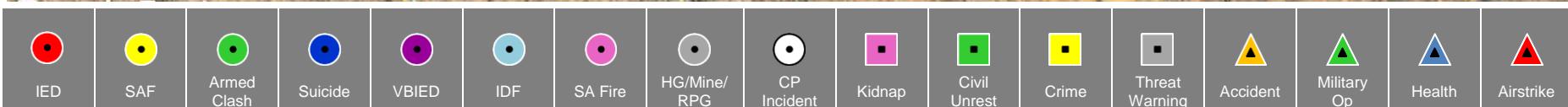
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LIBYA ACTIVITY MAP

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TRIPOLI ACTIVITY MAP



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OUTLOOK

Short term outlook

- The north-west coastline remains unstable. GNA Western Command has launched a new operation which aims to take control of the Ra's Ajdir border crossing, increasing tensions in the area of Zuwara which have resulted in clashes. Tensions also remain in Zawiya and to a lesser extent Sabratah. The situation has the potential to spread along ethnic lines. Forces in Kabaw, Nalut and Jadu are mobilizing while militias in Tripoli are on high alert and have increased their presence around the city.
- There is potential for localized clashes and security incidents around the greater Benghazi area after the fall of Sidi Akribesh to the LNA. Some fighters have managed to escape and are being pursued by the LNA outside of the city. Security operations could also result in further localized clashes in the Sidi Akribesh area as the LNA look to ensure any remnants do not regroup once again.

Medium to long term outlook

- As political talks fail to find any meaningful agreements, the concept of fresh elections has begun to gain traction amongst the political establishment. Deep divisions remain amongst the various factions, and an election blueprint has yet to be agreed. A number of those supporting the idea do not necessarily support the notion of a democratic establishment but are looking to exploit elections in a bid to gain power. The general population also remain skeptical of the political process and remain unclear what they would be voting for, highlighting the lack of structure and agreements currently around the process. The elections will trigger further posturing and maneuvering from various factions.
- IS continues to become bolder, mounting hit and run attacks against security forces and critical national infrastructure. They are also conducting criminal activity to raise funds and to help supply the group. The terrorist organization is believed to be trying to rebuild its capability in Libya and manpower is reported to be heading to the south of the country. IS will continue to benefit from the lack of political and security unity in Libya and maybe looking to establish a fresh alliance with other extremist groups like al-Qaeda.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Governance

- The UN Envoy to Libya, Ghassan Salamé has been criticized by the Libyan National Struggle Front after Salamé allegedly stated he would not hold any dialogue with Saif Gaddafi as he was wanted by the International Criminal Court for alleged war crimes. Salamé has refuted the claim and stated his comments were misreported and taken out of context.
- The family of former leader Muammar Gadhafi has called on Libyan citizens to register in the elections despite describing them as “poison in a cup of honey.”
- Haftar allegedly states he is supportive of elections however if the process fails, he may push forward his “popular mandate” and claim the presidency. Local reporting from Benghazi suggests people in general are supportive of the elections and of Haftar and have been registering to vote.
- The HNEC has stated that the number of voters reached 251,000 between December 06 and 30. The total of voters registered now stands at 1,761,000.
- HoR Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni has met with the Mayor of al-Bayda to discuss the possibility of providing a new HQ for the HNEC. The meeting comes after Haftar called for the HNEC to be moved out of Tripoli.
- On January 21 the Supreme Court of Tripoli will review an appeal by members of the Constitution Drafting Assembly (CDA) against the ruling of al-Bayda court on the legality of submitting the draft constitution to a vote. Al-Bayda court ruled against the adoption of the draft constitution by the CDA in October.
- The fuel shortage in Tripoli eased over the course of the week with the situation returning to normal.
- Reconciliation between Misrata and Tawergha has continued to progress this week. Tawergha families affected by the recent fire and flooding at the IDP camp in Serraj have received compensation while 301 “Halbous” Brigade (Misratan led) has offered to provide 70 apartments in the capital. A committee has also been established to help ensure that residents are able to return to the town from the 01 February.

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- The Libyan Audit Bureau has warned that it will be forced to step in and conduct an audit of the state's accounts and assets abroad in accordance with the law if various state institutions do not "become more responsible and make sweeping reforms."

Security

- The LNA has taken control of the last remaining RSCB stronghold in Sidi Akribesh. Some fighters managed to retreat to apartments nearby and are now surrounded by the LNA, however, victory has been declared.
- Special Forces (LNA) in Benghazi have indicated they are now planning on re-deploying to Derna where the LNA continue to lay siege to the city.
- Three Sufi shrines have been targeted this week. The first incident took place in Kufra on December 29. On the same day, another shrine was attacked in Suluq, Benghazi province. The third attack saw a shrine near Misrata attacked on December 31.
- A new 30 member security unit affiliated to the Sirte Security Directorate is to be formed and tasked with securing Ibn Sinai Hospital in the city.
- Tensions are increasing around Miski in the Tibesti area of northern Chad between the local Tebu population and the army. The two sides clashed on December 26 at the entrance to the town and further fighting is expected. An unconfirmed report has suggested that a Chadian rebel group was moving a large armed convoy inside the Libyan Desert at the end of December however it is not known if the two issues are connected.
- The GNA Mol has approved a move to recruit 500 additional members of the diplomatic security service to help protect foreign embassies and missions in Libya. The move comes after an announcement last week that a number of EU embassies will reopen in early 2018.
- The Shahat Security Directorate held a large meeting with various security agencies to discuss the development of a security plan for the city.
- Colonel Najmi al-Nakua, commander of the Presidential Guard (GNA), has discussed lifting the weapons ban with Russia.
- The murder of the Mayor of Misrata has been revealed to have been triggered by an internal tribal issue. There are seven suspects, some of who have been arrested however the incident has led the downfall of the chief of police. He is accused of failing to arrest those responsible for the murder but has claimed that the Presidential Council has failed the police.
- Young members of the Awagir tribe have called on the LNA to release the GNA Deputy Minister of the Interior Faraj Gaem. The demand was made in a statement published on January 01.
- GNA Western Command has launched a security operation around Zuwara and the border crossing at Ra's Ajdir. The situation has resulted in clashes with local militia and has the potential to spread along ethnic lines and cause further destabilization to the north west.

Economy

- The Libyan dinar has lost 9.1% of its value since November against the US dollar on the black market. In contrast, food prices have increased by 6% over the same period, increasing financial pressures on households.
- The public budget in Libya for 2018 has been set at around 42.5 billion Libyan dinar (\$31 billion dollars at official bank rates). Oil revenue is expected to reach 22.5 billion dinars in 2018 while taxes and customs tariffs are expected to hit 2.5 billion. There is also an alleged 5.5 billion dinar surplus from 2017. There is a deficit of around 12 billion dinars between expenditure and revenue.
- Dr. Ahmidah Tarbah, Mayor of Derna, has stated that cash liquidity estimated at 5 million LYD (about \$3.6 million) has arrived at Jomhouria Bank branches in the city. Tarbah stated that the money arrived after coordination with Brigadier General Kamal al-Jabali, commander of the Omar al-Mukhtar Operations Room (LNA). He also thanked the Petroleum Facilities Guard for 'providing humanitarian services and securing the cash in transit.'

Oil & Gas

- A helicopter carrying staff from an offshore platform near Sabratah to Tripoli nearly collided with another aircraft according to the NOC. Reports indicate the helicopter was carrying staff from Mellitah oil and gas at the time of the near miss. An investigation into the incident has begun.

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- The Sirte Oil and Gas Company held its annual meeting at the NOC HQ on December 28. Safety was high on the agenda after the incident at Zelten on December 23 in which three people died. The meeting also discussed the challenges faced by the company including financial and security difficulties.
- The Abu Attifel gas plant has returned to normal operations as of December 27 after the completion of a maintenance and test phase. The gas plant is expected to help improve the electricity situation in the coastal areas. The Zueitina gas plant was also expected to come back online after a period of maintenance before the end of the year.
- A pipeline targeted in an IED attack near Maradah on December 26 has been fixed quicker than expected.

Communications

- Hatif Libya has announced the disruption of all mobile phone communication by Almadar and Libyana in Imsaad, eastern Libya. Coverage in other areas east of Tobruk are also being effected after a civilian carried out illegal excavations, damaging a fiber optic cable 5617km from Tobruk. Repairs are underway.

Infrastructure

- The Jadu Municipal Council has begun work on a new pipeline to supply the area with water. Ten wells have been drilled south of the town, and the new line will connect these wells to the inhabitants.

Threat Warnings

- Threat Warning - Jan 03, Cyrenaica, Oil Crescent: The LNA and US AFRICOM believe Islamic State could be planning to target locations in the oil crescent.
- Threat Warning – Jan 04, Cyrenaica, Derna: Special Forces commander Wanis Bukhamada, stated that they were gearing up to move their personnel and equipment from Benghazi to Derna. Bukhamada stated that the LNA would give warnings prior to any operation to take control of Derna.

KEY DATES

Date	Occasion	Comment
February 17	Libyan Revolution Day	Public Holiday
March 19-21	International Conference and Exhibition for rebuilding Benghazi city	
May 01	May Day	Public Holiday
June 26 – 28	Eid al-Fitr	Public Holiday
September 01	Day of Arafah	Public Holiday
September 02 – 04	Eid al-Adha	Public Holiday

THREAT MATRIX

Region	Political	Terrorism	Militancy	Crime	K&R
Tripolitania	High-Extreme	High-Extreme	High-Extreme	High	High
Cyrenaica	Moderate	High-Extreme	Moderate	High	High
Fezzan	High	High-Extreme	High	High	High

Threat Scale Minimal Low Moderate High Extreme

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LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Zuwara: GNA launches a security operation against smuggling and human trafficking

On January 04, the Osama Jweli, commander of the GNA Western forces, announced that he was launching an 'anti-crime' operation in western Libya. Jweli stated that the operation would be in coordination with different security agencies and was targeting human trafficking and fuel smuggling. The operation comes after a series of meetings held in December with the local council.

Jweli deployed troops into Riqdalin and al-Jmail, near Zuwarah before forward mounting troops to the border crossing at Ra's Adjir. The following day, clashes erupted close to the border crossing, in Abu Kammash, and in Zelten between GNA Western Command and local Amazigh Zuwarah militias who had held the area. The border crossing was also closed.

Reports indicate that military movements have also begun in Kabaw, Nalut and Jadu while militias in Tripoli are watching the developments with concern. The targeting of Amazigh forces in Zuwarah may well see wider destabilization along ethnic lines in the north-west area.

Sufi shrines targeted across Libya

Three Sufi shrines have been targeted this week. The first incident took place in Kufra on December 29 and saw the body of Mahdi al-Senussi exhumed and his shrine desecrated. The attack has been strongly condemned by GNA President Fayed Sarraj who has promised to bring the perpetrators to justice.

On the same day, the shrine to Libyan hero Omar al-Mukhtar was attacked in Suluq, Benghazi province. Omar al-Mukhtar was a Libyan resistance fighter against the Italian occupation from 1911. Mukhtar had a strong relationship with the Senussi Movement from 1895. The third incident saw the Marabat shrine near Misrata attacked on December 31.

Misrata: The mayor's murder revealed as an internal tribal issue

The perpetrators of the murder of the Mayor of Misrata have been revealed as members of the mayor's own tribe – the Ramla. Seven people are suspected of involvement including three brothers. The men were involved in an incident in al Khoms in November where the three brothers lost a fourth brother. The mayor's apparent refusal to name him as a martyr is believed to have been the trigger for the attack. However, it is believed that they had intended to abduct and blackmail him and not kill him.

IS: Interviews give an insight into the group which AFRICOM warn is planning further attacks

Interviews with two IS members arrested by the LNA in Sabah have been aired on Egyptian TV. One man described how he and his family traveled from France to join IS in May 2016. He claims his family was sent to live in Derna while he undertook basic training and went on operations with IS units in the desert. He claims that towards the end of his tenure, IS units consisting of six men and two vehicles were sent into the desert to carry out criminal activity as the group's funds were running low in the area. He was apparently losing faith in the organization at the time of his arrest. He claims he ended up with scabies while his family went hungry and cold in Derna. He refused to leave the medical facility in Sabah after treatment for scabies and was waiting for his family to join him from Derna when he was arrested.

The second man claimed to have been in Benghazi from 2013 after traveling there from his home in Egypt. He pledged allegiance to IS in July 2015 and took part in four operations against the LNA. He eventually fled the city, describing how they took hostages to exchange for those arrested by the LNA. He eventually also ended up in Sabah where, like the French national, he was arrested.

US Africa Command stated this week that the group was continuing to rebuild its capability in Libya and is believed to be planning attacks against a number of targets including the oil crescent. AFRICOM believe they will continue to mount hit and run type attacks as they regroup.

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WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Tripolitania

Significant activity

- Arrest - Jan 01, Tripoli Province, Serraj: A Chevrolet Optra with three male passengers was stopped at a checkpoint and searched. The driver attempted to drive away after security forces found an AK47 in the vehicle. Security forces opened fire in an unsuccessful attempt to stop the vehicle. Two of the suspects were arrested.
- Arrest - Jan 02, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: The al-Wadi Operations Room arrested Colonel Muhammad Mahrah, a member of the Revolutionaries Operations Room. Mahrah had been a member of the Wadi Operations Room but had resigned over their refusal to respond to calls for a ceasefire during the September 2017 clashes. He was released three days later.
- Arrest - Jan 02, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: RDF arrested Hussein Bouila Jazwi. Jazwi is reported to be from Ajdabiya and fought under 17 February Revolution forces.
- Armed Clashes - Jan 02, Tripoli Province, Janzour: Armed clashes took place between two prominent families in Janzour during the night. The families are reportedly connected to criminal activities, and further clashes are expected.
- Murder/ Execution - Jan 02, Tripoli Province, Ayn Zara: Brigade 42 commander's brother was attacked at home and burnt alive. He was taken to Tripoli Medical Centre where he later died from injuries sustained.
- Shooting - Jan 03, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Two civilians had an argument over vehicle ownership. The argument escalated into a fight in which the two males then began to shoot at each other. Nobody was injured. The incident occurred in the area immediately to the east of the International Airport in Hay as-Salam.
- Demonstration - Jan 03, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: The Teachers Union held a protest in Tripoli to demand a pay increase. Teachers threatened to suspend classes if their demands were not met.
- Shooting - Jan 04, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A gang began firing into the air, causing panic. A number of vehicles also crashed.
- Arrest - Jan 04, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: The Nawassi Brigade arrested Abdulsalam Ibrahim for cocaine dealing. Ibrahim, sporting a large bruise, admitted to possession of 214 grams of cocaine.

Cyrenaica

Significant activity

- Murder/ Execution - Dec 31, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: An attempted assassination took place against Colonel Jala al-Hassi, commander of the military prison in Qurnada. The perpetrators remain unknown.
- Armed Clashes - Jan 01, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: The LNA continues to carry out clearance operations after taking the Municipal Hotel resulting in sporadic fighting.
- Arrest - Jan 01, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: The LNA arrested eight members of the same family for smuggling opposition fighters out of Sidi Akribesh.
- Security Announcement - Jan 01, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: The LNA has established a new Rapid Intervention Battalion in Bayda. Al-Senoussi al-Zwei has been given command of the battalion.
- Arrest - Jan 01, Benghazi Province, Qaminis: The LNA arrested two opposition fighters fleeing Sidi Akribesh.
- Armed Clashes - Jan 01, Derna Province, Daher Al-Hamer: The LNA clashes with MSCD in Daher Al-Hamer. Three LNA soldiers were wounded.
- Armed Clashes - Jan 02, Derna Province, Derna: Clashes continued between the LNA and MSCD in Derna with reports a mine strike caused LNA casualties. A MiG-21 also conducted a reconnaissance flight over the city.
- IDF - Jan 02, Derna Province, Derna: LNA carried out IDF attacks against MSCD positions on the outskirts of Derna.
- IDF - Jan 03, Derna Province, Derna: LNA carried out IDF attacks against MSCD positions on the outskirts of Derna.

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- Murder/ Execution - Jan 03, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: Sala Aqliwan, the Education Minister, was shot and killed outside his home. The local Education Office strongly condemned his murder and announced that classes in the two would be suspended until further notice in protest. Aqliwan had recently declared himself as a candidate in the upcoming parliamentary elections. The reason for his murder is currently unknown.
- Mine Strike - Jan 03, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: A landmine detonated, killing Walid al-Rashafani, an LNA soldier.
- Mine Strike - Jan 04, Benghazi Province, Suq Al-Hout: A civilian was wounded when a mine detonated in Suq al-Hout.

Fezzan

Significant activity

- Armed Clashes - Jan 01, Murzuq Province, Sarir Tibesti: Clashes took place after the death of a gold miner in Sarir Tibesti. Fifteen people were subsequently killed in the clashes.
- Accident - Jan 01, Sabha Province, Mahdia: A man blew himself up in Mahdia, Sabah. Reports indicated he accidentally detonated a HG in his pocket while intoxicated. The incident was initially reported as a premature BBIED detonation.

ACRONYM LIST

AIOR – Anti-IS Operations Room (Sabratah)
 AQ - Al-Qaeda
 BAM – Al-Bunyan Al-Marsous (Misrata aligned)
 BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade / Saraya Defend Benghazi (SDB) (Al-Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
 CNI – Critical National Infrastructure
 GATMJB - Operations Room for the Liberation of the City Ajdabiya and Support for Benghazi Rebels
 GECOL – General Electricity Company of Libya
 GMMR – Great Man-made River
 GNA – Government of National Accord (UN-backed)
 GNC – General National Congress
 HCN - Host Country National
 HoR – House of Representatives (Tobruk based)
 IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
 IED - Improvised Explosive Device
 IOC - International Oil Company
 IS - Islamic State
 LIFG – Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
 LNA – Libyan National Army
 LPA – Libyan Political Agreement
 LROR - Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
 MoD - Ministry of Defense
 MoF - Ministry of Finance
 MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 MoHE - Ministry of Higher Education
 MoI - Ministry of Interior
 MoJ - Ministry of Justice
 MoO - Ministry of Oil
 MoT - Ministry of Transportation
 MSCD – Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna (AQ aligned)
 NFDK - No Further Details Known
 NGO - Non-Governmental Organization (aid/charity)
 NOC – National Oil Company
 NSG – National Salvation Government (GNC)
 NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
 PAX - Person, Persons or Passenger
 PC – Presidency Council (GNA)
 PG – Presidential Guard
 PFG- Petroleum Facilities Guard
 PSC - Private Security Company
 PSD - Private Security Detail
 RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
 RSCB - Revolutionary Shura Council of Benghazi
 RTA - Road Traffic Accident
 SDB – Saraya Defend Benghazi / Benghazi Defense Brigade (BDB) (Al-Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
 TCN - Third Country National
 Technical - An improvised weapon-mounted pick-up truck
 UXO - Unexploded Ordnance

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