

1. The Big Picture

PC member resigns; military governor post abolished

Political developments continue to unfold in Libya highlighting deepened fragmentation between political rivals and local dissatisfaction with the current status quo across the country. This week important political developments occurred in the Western and Eastern power blocs.

In a televised statement from the city of Benghazi, Fathi Al-Majbari, a member of the Presidential Council (PC), announced his resignation from the Sarraj-led PC of the Government of National Accord (GNA), whilst calling on ministers representing Libya's Eastern region to resign from their positions and depart Tripoli. Al-Majbari stated that PC officials are in constant danger due to the presence of militias that control the city and impose decisions with the use of force. Al-Majbari also noted the weakness of the Presidential Guard (PG) in the face of a cartel of militias dictating the security situation across the capital city. Al-Majbari's resignation comes three weeks' after his Tripoli residence was reportedly attacked by an "armed group of 50 men", injuring a number of guards, and forcing Al-Majbari to flee to Tunis and then to Benghazi in what he referred to as an attempt to "kidnap, hurt or kill" the PC member. The attack followed Al-Majbari's statement on the backing of Haftar's decision to hand over control of the Oil Crescent to the Eastern-based National Oil Corporation (NOC) under the Interim Government on 25 Jun 2018.

Moreover, among the many statements made by Al-Majbari, he warned that the PC and GNA were a danger to the rest of Libya, including Tripoli. Al-Majbari referred to a "three-levelled militia struggle", one within the individual Tripoli militias, one between Tripoli militias, and one with the militias forced out of the capital city.

Meanwhile, in Libya's East, the President of the House of Representatives (HoR), Aguila Saleh, issued a decision to abolish the post of military governor, a position currently held by the Libyan National Army (LNA) General Abdulrazzak Nadori. According to Saleh's media advisor, the decision follows the complete "liberation" of the Eastern region and the subsequent end of military campaigns. On 19 Jun 2016, Saleh appointed Nadori as military governor responsible for the areas of Derna to Bin Jawad. Moreover, following Khalifa Haftar receiving health treatment overseas and amid rumors of his potential succession in Apr 2018, Nadori emerged as a potential candidate. Since the return of Haftar to the political scene following his stabilized health condition, reports suggest Nadori was increasingly sidelined. Whilst the motive behind the abolition of the military governor post is reportedly in response to the end of the East's military campaigns, the decision could potentially contribute to existing reports of wider rifts within the LNA.

Beyond, in the Oil Crescent, on 16 Jul, the NOC declared force majeure on exports from Al-Zawiya's oil terminal as production at the Sharara oil field fell to 125,000 barrels per day (bpd) leaving no excess crude for export. The NOC stated that field production is limited to 125,000 bpd, an amount adequate to only meet the requirements of the Zawiya refinery.

KEY POINTS

- PC member resigns & departs Tripoli
- Military governor post abolished
- Force majeure on Al-Zawiya terminal



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2. National Security Map

Armed group kidnaps Judge, Prosecutor & 2 policemen from Waddan Court's HQ

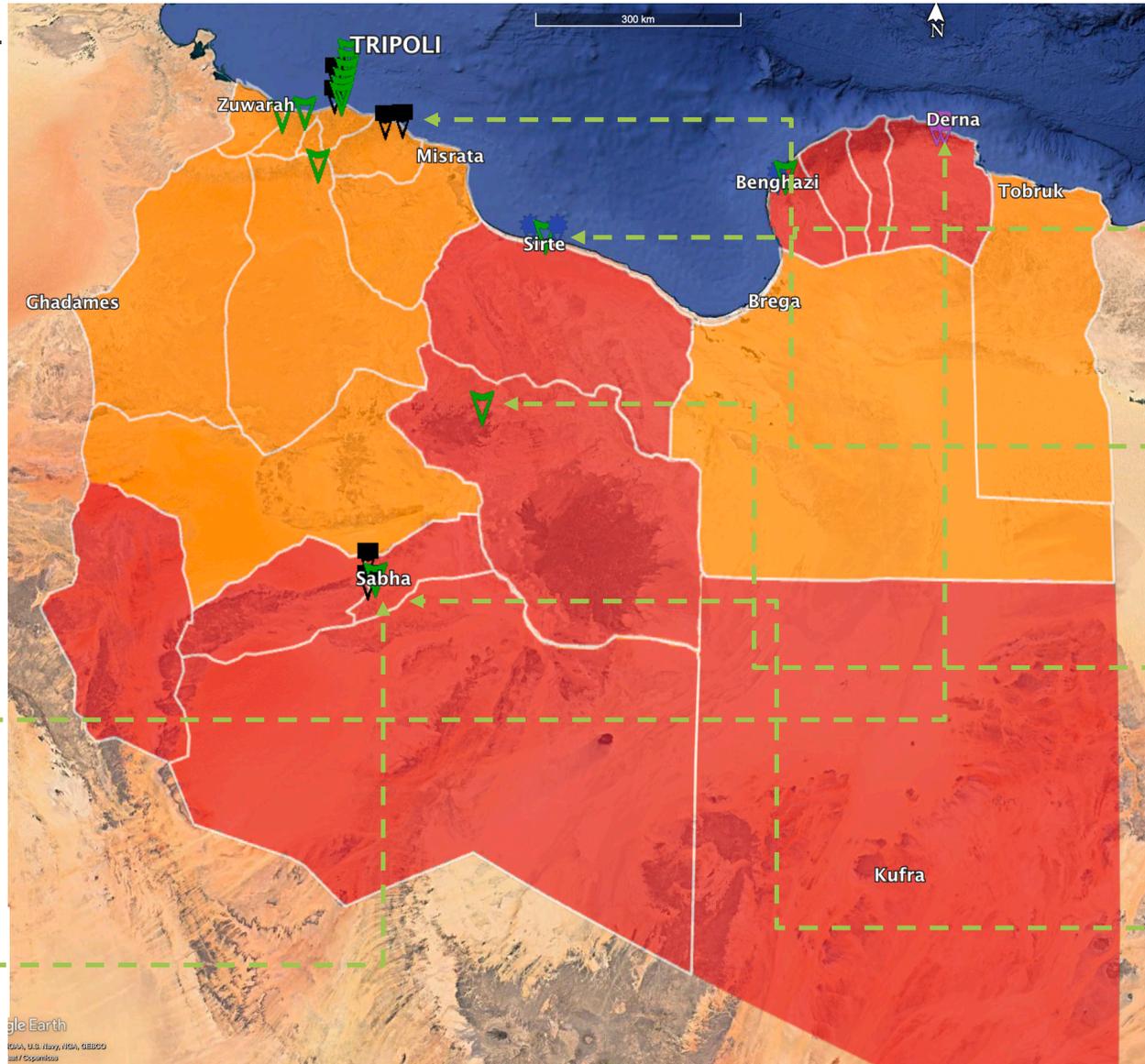
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

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



Reports suggest violent clashes erupted between the Libyan National Army (LNA) and remnants of the Derna Protection Force (DPF) in Derna's old city area at dawn on 20 Jul. According to reports, a militant identified as Abdul Hamid Baraka was killed as a result of the violent clashes between the army and militants in the centre of Derna.

Unidentified gunmen reportedly shot a man after he refused to hand over his vehicle in Sabha on 16 Jul.

Local reports from 20 Jul suggest Sirte's residents located an improvised explosive device (IED) weighing an approximate 200 kilograms (kg) in Sirte's Industrial area. According to the demining team, due to the weight of the device and lack of resources, authorities detonated the IED following necessary security precautions.

According to reports, clashes erupted between a local and the supervisors of the Falfoul Resort in the Ghanima area at approximately 1800hrs on 14 Jul. There were no further security reports reported.

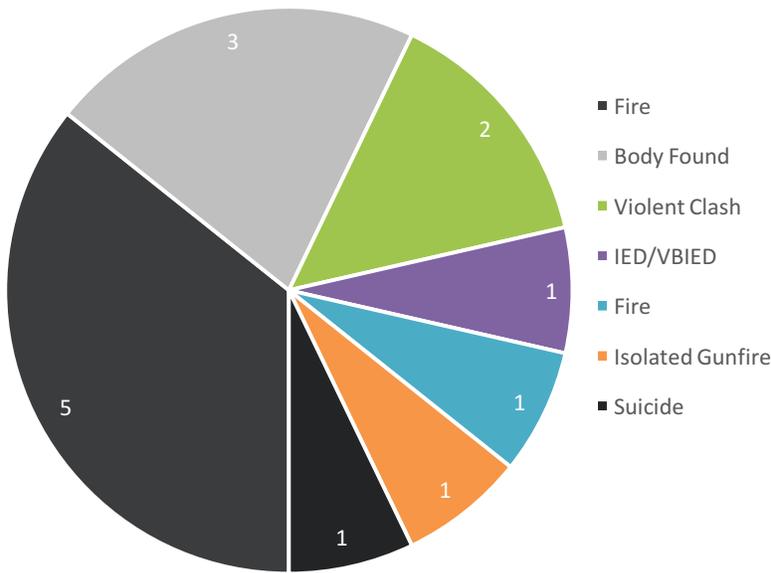
Local reports suggest two suspects were arrested for the kidnapping of a judge, a prosecutor, and two policemen from the headquarters of the Waddan Court in the Municipality of Jufra. The latest reports suggest the families of the abductees closed the road linking Waddan to Sirte in protest against the kidnapping of their relatives on 23 Jul.

Reports suggest Chadian militiamen kidnapped a local man on his way back to his house in Samnu on 18 Jul.

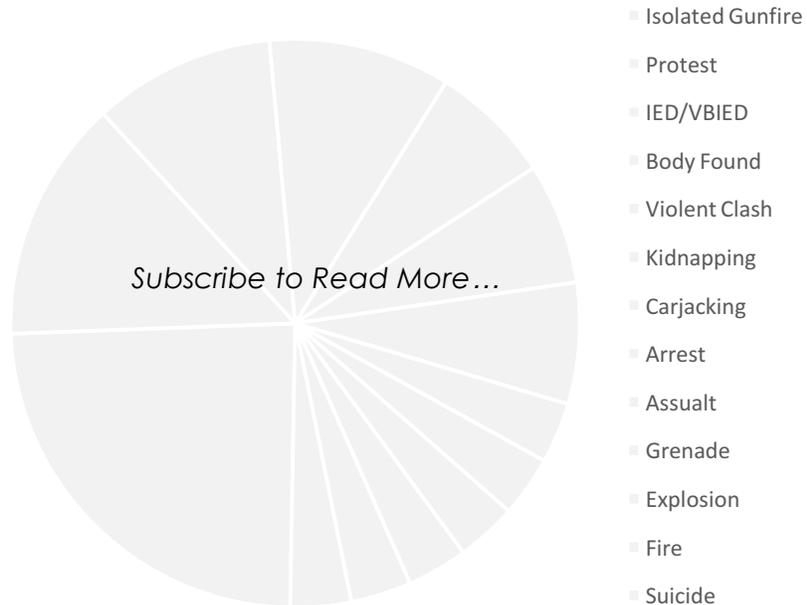
3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Decrease in fatalities across Libya; majority of security incidents in Tripoli

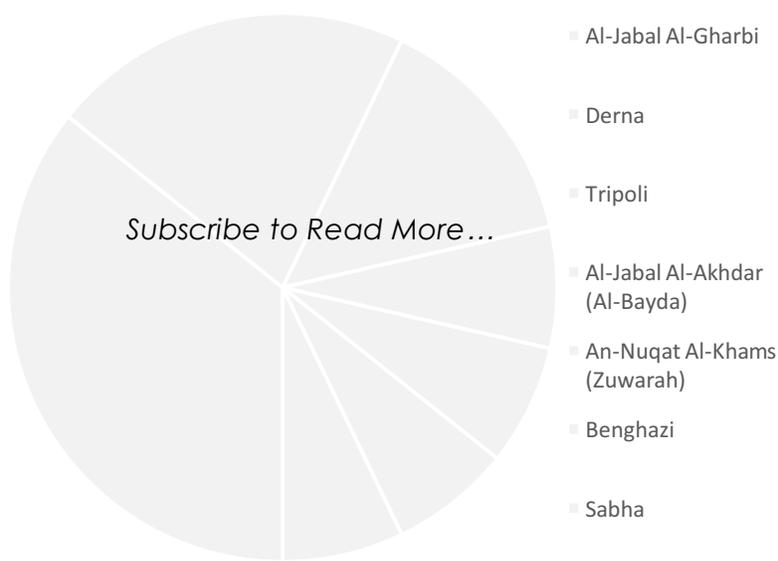
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



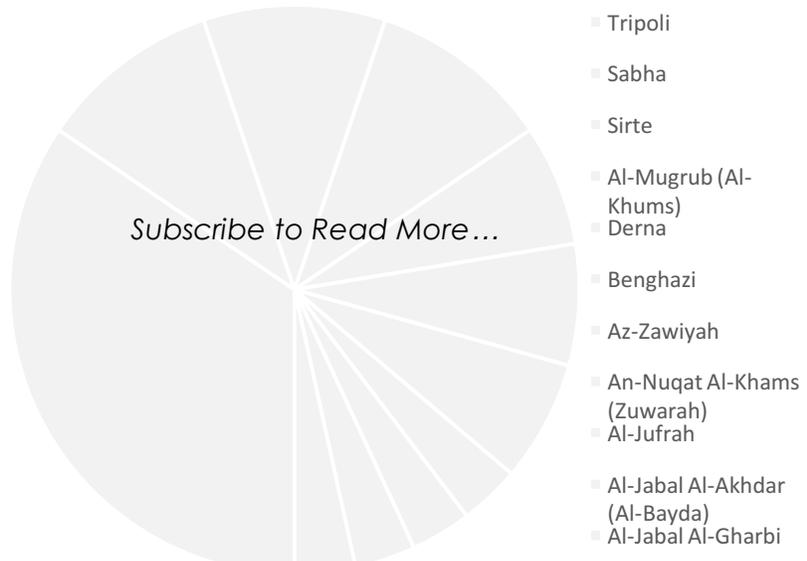
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



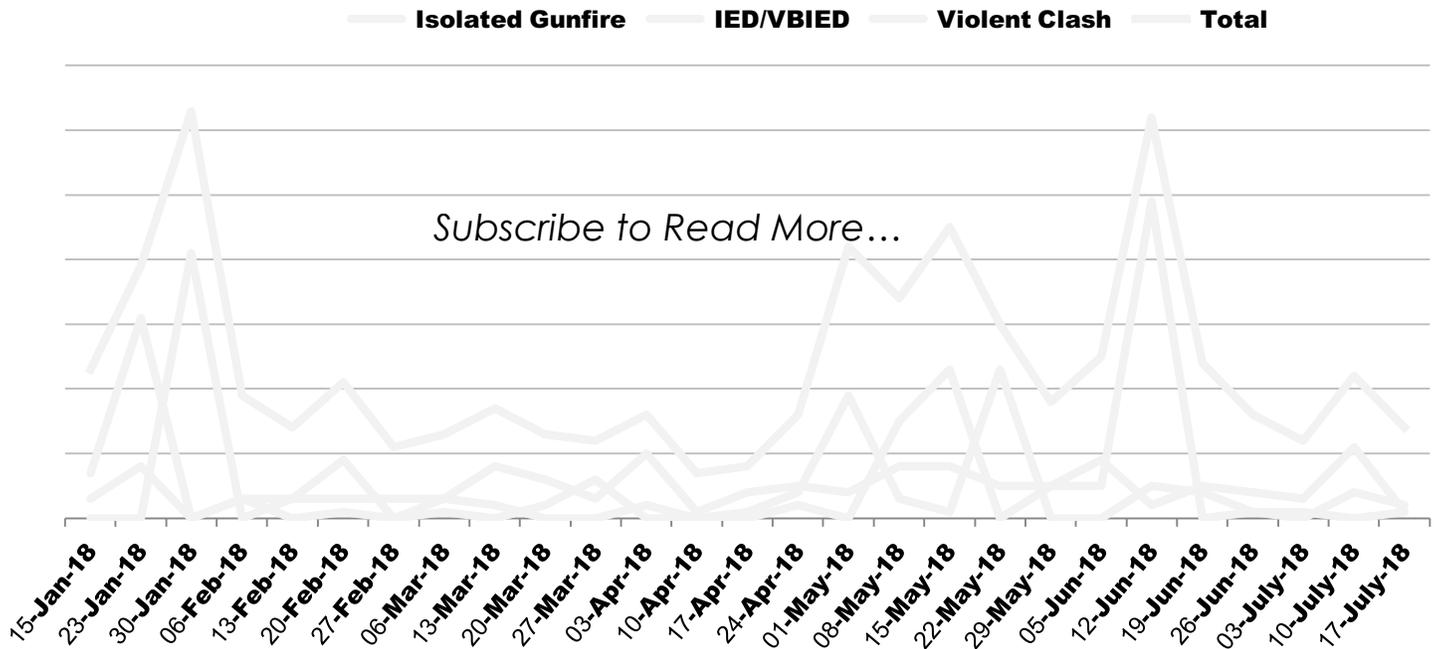
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



Nationwide incidents by national district (Past week)



Nationwide Fatalities by Type of Attack (Past 27 Weeks)



Data Analysis

Whispering Bell recorded this week a total of 14 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 22 deaths reported last week and 12 the week before. This week 3 bodies were found across Libyan cities, with a fire representing the highest number of fatalities. Several security incidents were reported throughout the country, including 7 cases of isolated gunfire, 4 protests, 3 IED/VBIED incidents, 2 carjackings, and 2 kidnappings.

In Western Libya, Whispering Bell recorded a total of 17 incidents, including 10 incidents in the capital city, Tripoli. Whispering Bell recorded an increase in protests across the capital city, in addition to militia movements. Reports suggest several armed vehicles belonging to the Ossoud Tajoura Battalion ("Tajoura Lions") were stationed at Tripoli's Abu Shusha Roundabout in the Tajoura area, with reports of sounds of sporadic gunfire heard by anti-aircraft vehicles in the morning on 22 Jul. Initial reports suggest the Ossoud Tajoura Battalion were testing their weapons in preparation for an alleged attack on the Deterrence Apparatus stationed at Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport. According to reports, the alleged preparation for an attack on the Deterrence Apparatus was fueled by the killing of the leader of the Ossoud Tajoura Battalion in a drive-by shooting in front of Tripoli Mall on 30 Jun. The drive-by shooting was an alleged assassination attempt by the Deterrence Apparatus. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, reports suggest a dispute between local militias from Az-Zāwiyah and Warshaffana resulted in the temporary closure of At Tuwaybiyah area along the Coastal Road at approximately 1800hrs on 15 Jul. Additional reports suggest two anti-aircraft vehicles and 10 gunmen were stationed along the Coastal Road. There were no further security incidents reported and the motive behind the dispute remains unknown, though militia clashes remain common along the Coastal Road.

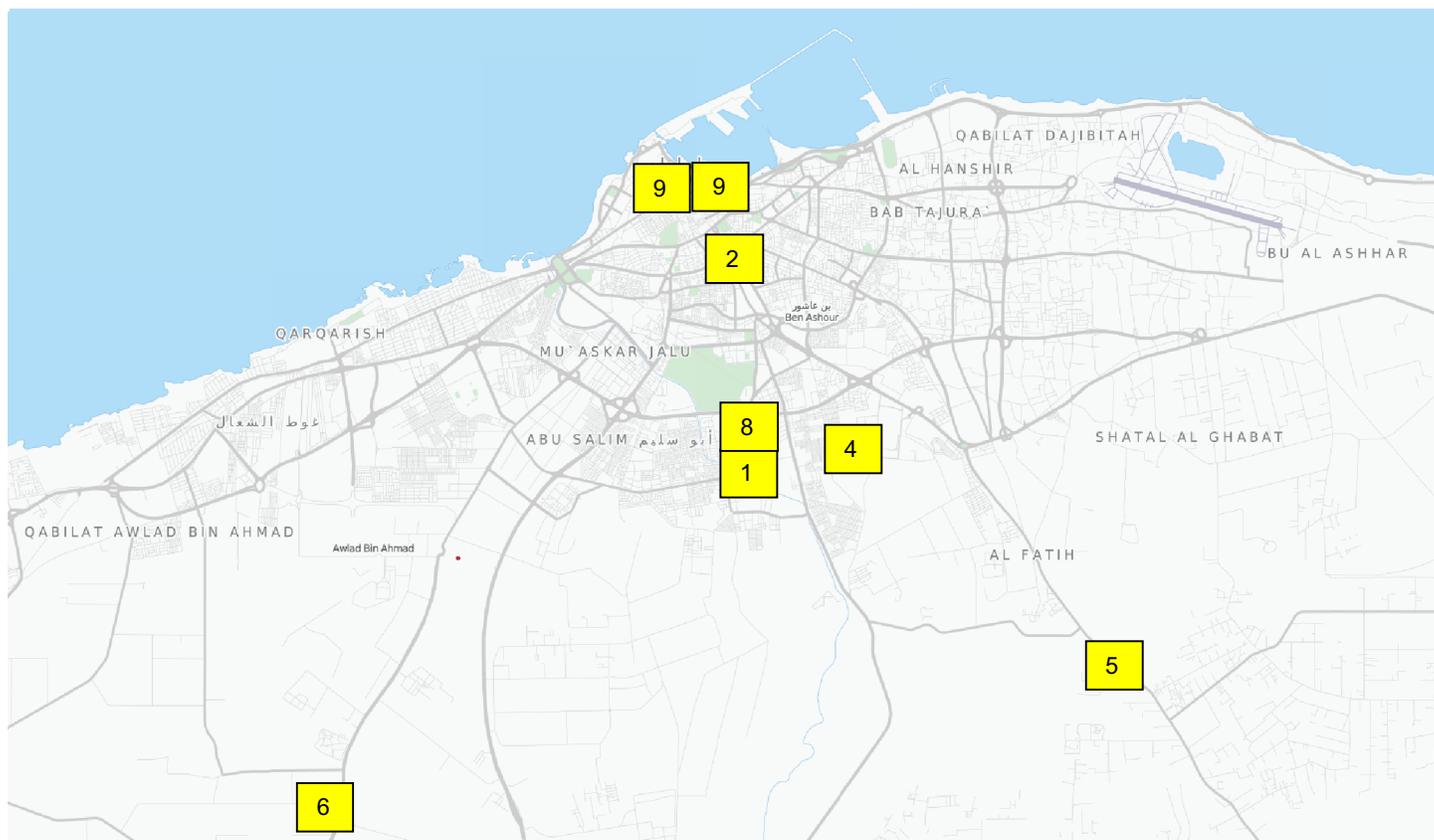
This week in Central Libya reports suggest Sirte's locals protested the lack of services in the city, including liquidity shortages and power cuts, and subsequently blocked off roads at night on 20 Jul.

Turning to southern Libya, reports suggest a dispute between two families resulted in the death of one individual in Sabha's Al-Gharda area on 14 Jul.

In Libya's East, local reports suggest violent clashes between the Libyan National Army's (LNA) 102 Infantry Battalion and militants resulted in the death of two LNA forces in Derna on 14 Jul. On 13 Jul, Derna's Al-Mughar area witnessed heavy clashes between the LNA and remnants of the city's militant groups, resulting in the LNA seizing large parts of the area, and subsequently forcing militants to retreat to the centre of Derna's Al-Nafar Street.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Protests across Tripoli due to power cuts & educational grievances



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (14 Jul) Member of Deterrence Apparatus kidnapped
2. (15 Jul) Graduates protest in front of PC HQ
3. (16 Jul) Deterrence Apparatus release 2 detained journalists
4. (16 Jul) High school students protest educational grievances
5. (16 Jul) Syrian man found dead inside vehicle in Ain Zara
6. (18 Jul) Gunmen carjack vehicle in Al-Kreymiya
7. (18 Jul) Woman commits suicide in an unidentified building
8. (19 Jul) 2 employees assaulted at the Hadba station
9. (20 Jul) Locals protest against lengthy power cuts
10. (21 Jul) Mol arrest 3 Libyans for killing local and African worker

Militia movements

Reports suggest a military convoy mobilized toward Tripoli's Airport Road Bridge at approximately 0900hrs on 19 Jul. Initial reports suggest clashes erupted between the Ghneiwa militia and the 301 Brigade in front of Tripoli's Brega Oil Marketing Company headquarters at approximately 0900hrs on 19 Jul. According to reports, an affiliate of the Ghneiwa militia attempted to fill petrol from the the company's oil tank and was refused by the 301 Battalion due to the reservoir belonging to the company's employees and operations after which a dispute erupted. In retaliation, the Ghneiwa militia allegedly attacked the Brega Oil Marketing Company's HQ with heavy weapons.

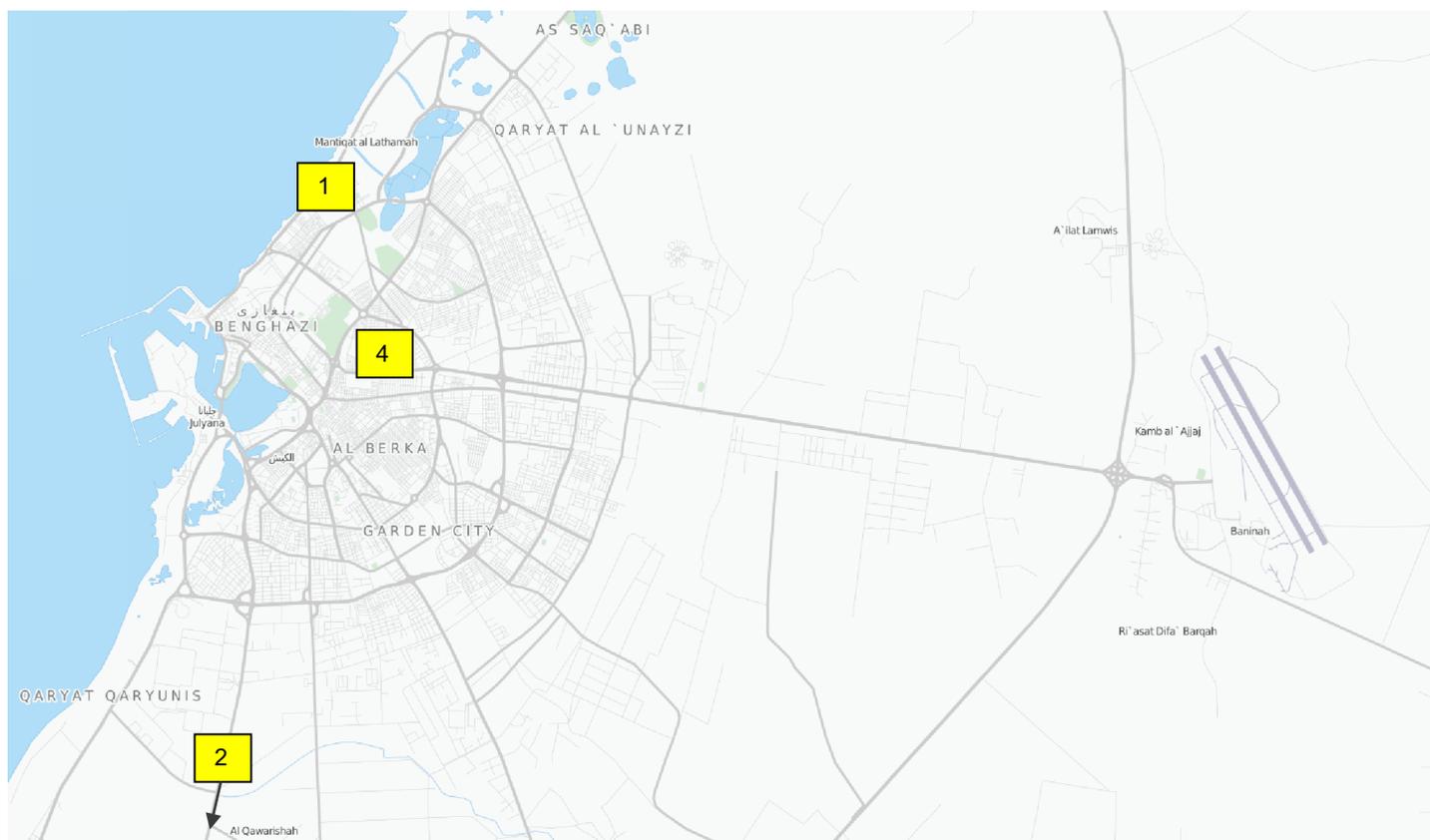
Protests across Tripoli

Reports suggest high school students protested in front of the University of Tripoli and Nasser University at approximately 1030hrs on 16 Jul, after security forces fired

gunshots in the air in an effort to disperse students protesting against educational grievances on 15 Jul. Additional reports suggest some high school students were arrested by security forces, though the Director of Tripoli's Security reportedly called on the students' parents to collect their children from the headquarters of the General Investigation. Beyond this, locals reportedly temporary closed Tripoli's highway, Ghout Ashaal Roundabout, and Jamaa Assaqa-Addel Street crossroads with burning tires in protest against lengthy power cuts at approximately 0015hrs on 17 Jul. Moreover, the General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) warned over the complete collapse of the electrical grid in Tripoli due to the areas of Az-Zāwiyah, Janzur, Gharyan and Khoms refusing to partake in the power cuts to decrease the load on the grid. Lengthy power cuts will likely result in increased local grievances amid soaring temperatures, and may have potential ramifications on the security situation across the capital city.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

Wounded soldiers protest and close road; medical treatment demanded



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (14 Jul) IED detonates killing 1 in Al-Zrayriyah
2. (17 Jul) Fishing grenade kills boy in Qamanis
3. (19 Jul) Authorities arrest armed gang
4. (21 Jul) Wounded soldiers protest and close public Rd

Criminal gang arrested

Reports suggest authorities arrested an armed gang responsible for the kidnapping and rape of boys from the ages of 15 to 22 years-old in an unidentified farm in Benghazi. According to reports, the armed gang blackmail the victims with amounts of cash ranging from 100 Libyan dinars (LYD) to 500 LYD. Rape allegations remains a sensitive social topic across Libya and may result in acts of retaliation.

IED detonates killing 1

Local reports suggest an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated resulting in the death of a 16-year-old in Benghazi's Al-Zrayriyah area on 14 Jul. Explosive remnants of war (ERW) remain a common cause of civilian casualties across Benghazi.

Fishing grenade injures boy

Local reports suggest a homemade fishing grenade detonated resulting in the injury of a young boy on the beaches of Qamanis, West of Benghazi

on 17 Jul. In a similar incident, a man was killed when a homemade fishing grenade detonated while he was fishing in Benghazi's Guliana area on 15 Apr.

Wounded soldiers protest

Reports suggest wounded Libyan National Army (LNA) soldiers at Benghazi's Al-Jalaa Hospital for Surgery and Accidents closed the public road in protest against the lack of medical treatment and services for the wounded in the evening on 21 Jul. According to reports, many of the protestors were wounded in the recent military campaign in Derna. Recent reports suggest the file of wounded LNA soldiers remains a common cause of protests and the closure of roads across Benghazi. The protestors may resort to destabilizing the security situation beyond protests and road closures across the city, should Eastern authorities fail to meet their demands.

6. What's next

Salame briefs UNSC on latest political developments; French FM in Libya

POLITICAL FORECAST

On 16 Jul, the United Nations (UN) Envoy to Libya, Ghassan Salame, briefed the UN Security Council (UNSC) on the latest political developments in Libya from Tripoli. Salame stated that it would be “unwise to conduct elections” without the right conditions on the ground, noting the motive of those who seek to disrupt the elections. Regarding the country’s economic situation, Salame stated that the recent decision to resume oil exports would fail to hold if key issues including the fair distribution of wealth and the misuse of resources failed to be addressed. Beyond this, Salame called on the House of Representatives (HoR) to accelerate the process of voting on a law for the referendum of the Libyan constitution. Salame also urged the UNSC to positively respond to the call of the Presidential Council (PC) to form an assessment committee to oversee the Central Banks’ transactions in Al-Bayda and Tripoli. Meanwhile, the Head of the PC, Fayez Al-Serraj, allocated over 66 million Libyan dinars (LYD) to support the High National Election Commission (HNEC) preparations for the holding of elections by 10 Dec 2018. Beyond, in a clear sign to push the French initiative of holding elections, the French Foreign Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, met with Al-Serraj ahead a series of planned talks with various political actors in Libya on 23 Jul.

SECURITY FORECAST

The unresolved issue of lengthy power cuts will likely continue to fuel protests and may potentially destabilize the security situation across Tripoli amid reports of increased local dissatisfaction. Additionally, protests related to educational grievances will likely persist amid unheard calls by high school students. Moreover, this week, reports suggest clashes erupted between the Ghneiwa militia and 301 brigade, along with reports of tensions between the Tajoura Lions and Deterrence Apparatus. A confrontation between rival militias may expose the capital city to sporadic security incidents in the upcoming period. Meanwhile, along the Coastal Road, reports suggest the Al-Kani militia of Tarhuna returned to the Garabouli area following their withdrawal, corroborating Whispering Bell’s assessment of the likelihood of shifts in control of checkpoints in the area. In Sirte, locals protested the lack of services in the city, including power cuts and liquidity shortages. Unheard calls may result in further protests and sporadic security incidents. Beyond in Libya’s South, criminals continue to engage in illicit activity, including Chadian elements, which may prompt increased Libyan National Army (LNA) presence in the area. In Libya’s East, the LNA will likely continue to clash with remnants of militants in Derna, whilst protests by wounded LNA soldiers may result in tensions in Benghazi.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

In an article for “*Al-Monitor*”, the author, Jason Pack, outlines the possible motives behind Haftar handing back control of the Oil Crescent to the Tripoli-based National Oil Corporation (NOC).” In reality, Hifter’s decision to hand over the oil crescent ports to the Eastern NOC was likely initially impulsive, and then two loose goals wound up being grafted onto it. Those goals are 1) to conceal his weakness at briefly losing control of the oil crescent ports to militia leader Ibrahim Jadhran the previous week by showing strength by standing up to the international community; and 2) to secure consistent funding for his Libyan National Army (LNA) — the center of his political and military power — by forcing his political adversaries in western Libya to reshuffle administrative control of the CBL and alter the distribution of oil revenue. He achieved the first goal quite admirably as his action was initially received quite well by those demographics in eastern Libya to which he is beholden — namely the eastern tribes, the communities near the oil installations and his core supporters around Al-Marj. To facilitate the second goal, he established five preconditions for reopening the eastern oil ports.” said Pack.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

In an article for “*Arab News*”, the author, Hafed Al-Ghwel, proposes three “fundamental building blocs” for a long-term solution in Libya. “The first issue that needs to be addressed is the full recognition that the conflict started as, and is still, essentially a civil war between those who supported Qaddafi and those who opposed him and were enabled by foreign help. That basic split between the sides gave way in the years that followed to multiple conflicts among various groups, with backing from the outside powers that armed and funded them, and continue to do so. The second fundamental part of the solution is the basic recognition that Libya is deeply fragmented along tribal and regional lines. This necessitates a loose system of governance arranged along federal lines, with the fair distribution of oil revenues, that reflects Libya’s multiple parts, both geographically and based on interests, to engender a sense of trust and security in each part and allow them to rule their own. Finally, all outside powers and interested parties must coordinate to have one voice when it comes to Libya. This united stand should be designed with specific carrots and sticks to force all groups in the country to come to the negotiating table with no preconditions and accept the basic rules of the game, negotiated without arms and violence.” Said Ghwell.

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