

1. The Big Picture

Tensions following Turkey-GNA MoU to delineate maritime boundaries

This week witnessed key events dominating the overall political and security environment that have already indicated premature signs of probable further tensions on the ground. On the political front, Turkey and the Government of National Accord (GNA) triggered Eastern Mediterranean tensions after signing two memoranda of understanding (MoU) during Fayeze Al-Serraj's visit to Dolmabahce Palace in Istanbul, Turkey, on 28 Nov. The MoU included a Turkish-GNA agreement to delineate the maritime boundaries between the two countries, which was condemned by Egypt, Greece and Cyprus. Separately, the US Department of State reported a meeting between US senior officials and the LNA's Khalifa Haftar to discuss ways to end hostilities and achieve a political solution to Libya's conflict in Washington DC. Meanwhile, on the security front, a GNA-affiliated attack targeting Al-Feel Oilfield resulting in a temporary production halt, fuelled retaliation Libyan National Army (LNA) airstrikes in the Southern region.

On 01 Dec, the Greek Foreign Minister, Nikos Dendias, stated that an agreement was reached with his Egyptian counterpart, Sameh Shoukry, following a meeting in Cairo, Egypt, to accelerate talks between expert teams to define and delineate Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) between Greece and Egypt. The meeting came in response to the Turkish-GNA agreement to delineate the maritime boundaries between the two countries, where the second MoU included security and military cooperation. As a result of the agreement to outline Turkish-Libyan maritime boundaries, Greece, Egypt, and Cyprus, referred to the MoU as a serious breach of international law that disregards the lawful rights of other Eastern Mediterranean countries. In the particular case of Greece, Dendias warned that the Libyan Ambassador to Athens would face expulsion if he failed to present the contents of the MoU to Greece. The Turkish-GNA deal exacerbated tensions of an ongoing dispute with Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt, over O&G drilling rights in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkish-GNA cooperation is no news, but the latest agreement comes at a critical juncture of the conflict as the GNA's posture is weakened. Of note, Turkey's Navy has long pushed Tripoli to claim territorial waters off Libya's coast to curtail Greece's influence in the Mediterranean.

The development also saw the rejection of key Libyan tribal components. The Social Council of Werfalla Tribe, and the Council of Elders and Dignitaries of Tarhuna, denounced the agreement and considered it a violation of national sovereignty, whilst rejecting Turkish interference in international affairs. The Werfalla tribe called on Libyan people to unite through a national meeting without any external interference. Meanwhile, the Council of Elders and Dignitaries of Tarhuna indicated that it had previously warned over the "government of treason in Tripoli" concluding several suspicious deals. Of particular

importance, the Tarhuna tribal factions concluded their statement by warning that the "zero hour" has approached and thus called for "Jihad". The development is expected to draw in additional players, with the latest reports indicating the LNA calling on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to intervene. The agreement is likely to increase questioning over the GNA's legitimacy in its capacity to take such decisions solely, as well as it undermining the prospects of the upcoming Berlin conference on Libya.

In a separate key political development, the US Ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland, met Al-Serraj, and discussed prospects for ending hostilities around Tripoli and efforts towards securing a political solution to the conflict in light of "escalating Russian intervention". The meeting came a day after Haftar met with senior US officials in Washington DC, to discuss ways to end hostilities and achieve a political solution to Libya's conflict. Similar to the rhetoric voiced in Norland's meeting with Al-Serraj, the US officials expressed "serious concern over Russia's exploitation of the conflict against the will of the Libyan people". The development comes at a critical phase of the conflict and would further question US policy towards Libya, particularly as its meeting with Haftar came less than 10 days after the DoS directly called on Haftar to cease his offensive.

On the security front, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) confirmed the resumption of production at Al-Feel Oilfield following a temporary halt due to a GNA-aligned attack on the field and subsequent LNA airstrikes on 27 Nov. The NOC noted that facilities sustained some minor damage, though no NOC personnel were harmed. LNA units retook Al-Feel Oilfield after conducting airstrikes targeting the field to counter an attack led by the GNA-aligned Protection Force (SPF). The aftermath of the repelled GNA attack saw a series of additional LNA airstrikes in the South, including reports of a fatal airstrike in Umm Al-Aranib prompting a local protest. In addition, the prominent Tebu SPF commander, Hassan Moussa, was killed in an LNA airstrike targeting his vehicle as he attempted to flee Al-Feel oilfield after leading the attack.

On the counter-terrorism (CT) front, the GNA's Interior Ministry announced the arrest of the Ansar Al-Sharia (ASL)-Islamic State (IS) coordinator, Imad Al-Shiqabi, days after he appeared in video footage threatening to reveal widespread corruption of the MoI and its head, Fathi Bashagha, whilst claiming that the ministry issued a service passport in his capacity as an advisor. The arrest attempted to quickly counter the serious claims.

KEY POINTS

- Turkey-GNA MoU sparks East. Med. tensions
- Senior US officials meet Haftar in Washington
- LNA repels attack on Al-Feel; high-profile arrest



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2. National Security Map

Al-Feel Oilfield resumes production after GNA attack & subsequent LAAF airstrikes

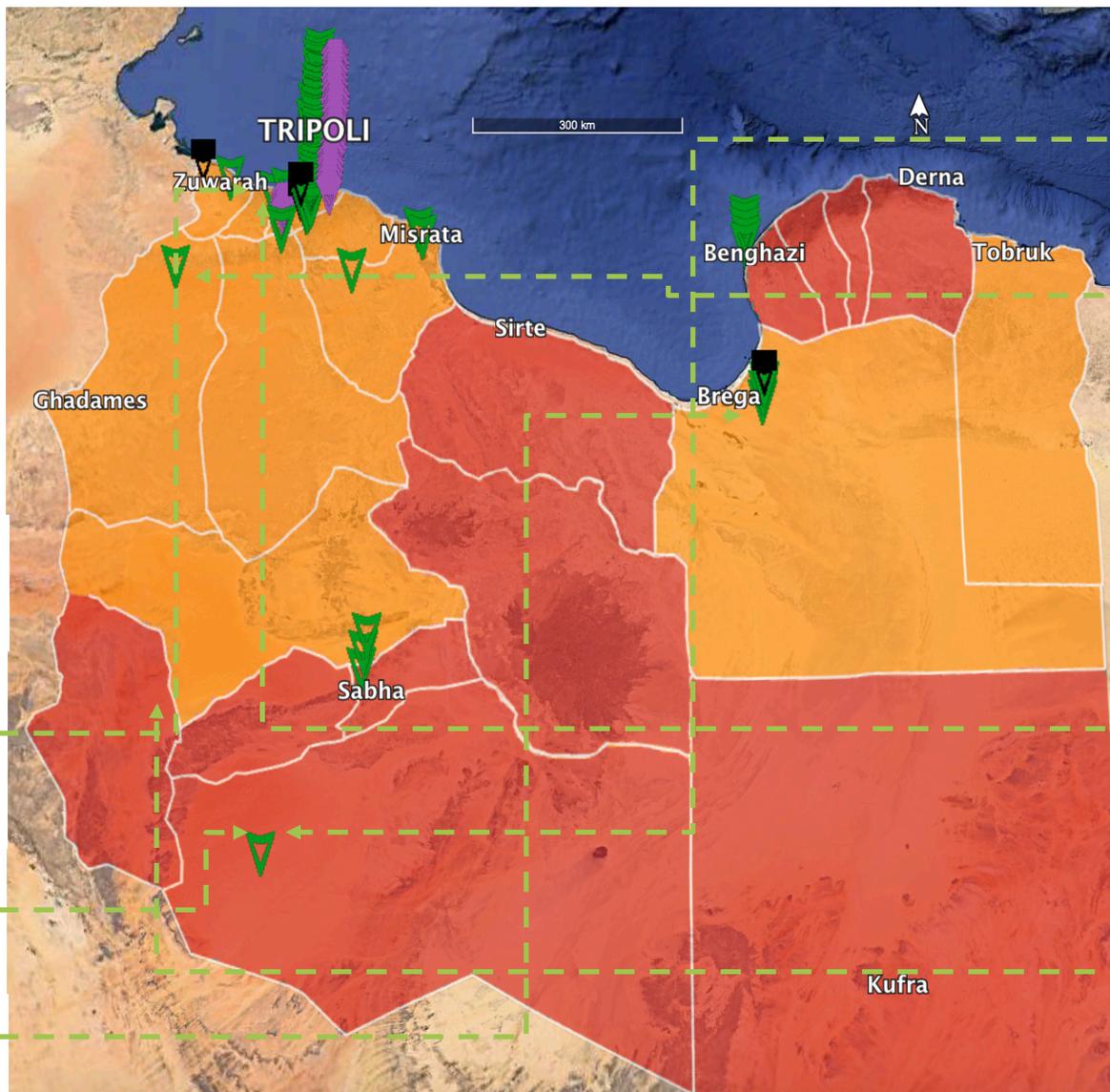
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

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



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Reports indicate an LAAF airstrike targeted an airstrip in Kabaw located in the Western mountains at approximately 1600hrs on 29 Nov. The GNA military spokesman, Mohammed Gnounou, stated that the airstrikes targeted an airstrip used for humanitarian purposes.

On 24 Nov, the LNA's General Administration of Ports announced all Libyan land border crossings are now under LNA control, with the exception of the main two GNA-controlled Libyan-Tunisian border crossings of Ras Ajdir and Dehiba Wazin Border Crossing.

Reports indicate a meeting was held between Ajajlat Central Support forces, a security apparatus, in which they declared their support for the LNA and their subsequent affiliation to the Eastern-based Interim Government in the morning on 25 Nov. Meanwhile, additional security apparatuses in the town announced their defection from the GNA and subsequent support for the Interim Government. Following the development, reports indicate several pro-LNA military vehicles deployed across several areas inside the town.

Reports indicate LNA units entered the town of Al-Awainat followed by their entry into Ghat hours later on 26 Nov. The development would closely follow the LNA's Southern Military Region commander, Belqasim Al-Abij, arriving in Awbari on 25 Nov, a day after he declared Murzuq a safe city.

On 26 Nov, the US Department of State issued a security warning on the heightened risk to civil aviation in light of ongoing clashes around Tripoli and increased involvement of foreign forces and mercenaries.

At approximately 1400hrs on 30 Nov, WB sources reported the reopening of Surman's Coastal Road after it was temporarily closed by locals burning tyres in protest of an LNA-Zawiya prisoner exchange excluding their relatives. Reports indicate a prisoner exchange deal between the LNA and Al-Zawiya militias resulted in the release of 10 LNA units exclusively from the East.

The LNA's Dignity Operations Room announced the death of Hassan Mousa Al-Tebawi, commanding the GNA-aligned group behind the latest attack on Al-Feel Oil Field, after an LAAF airstrike targeted his armed vehicle as he attempted to flee the field on 28 Nov.

Ajdabiya's Morality Police, supported by the pro-LNA166 Battalion and Internal Security, raided several farms on the outskirts of Ajdabiya leading to the discovery of weapons caches and fuel smuggling vehicles.

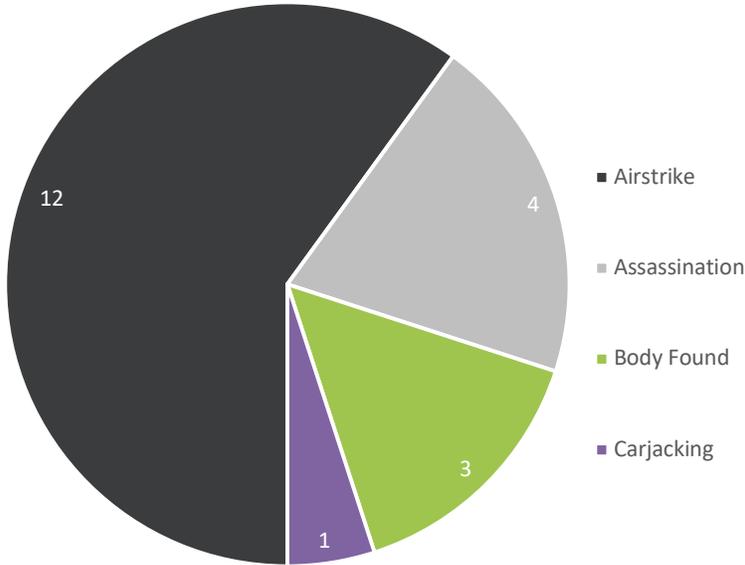
Libya Weekly Political and Security Update

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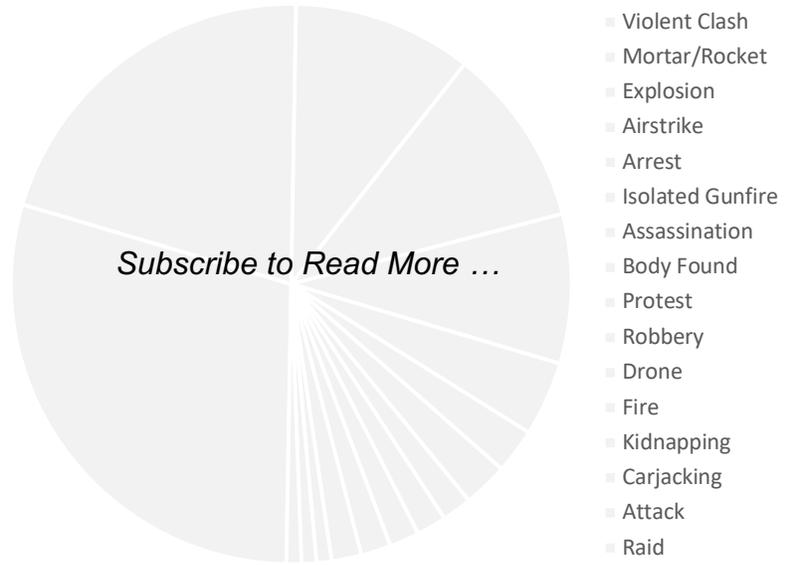
3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Evident increase in military activity in Western & Southern regions

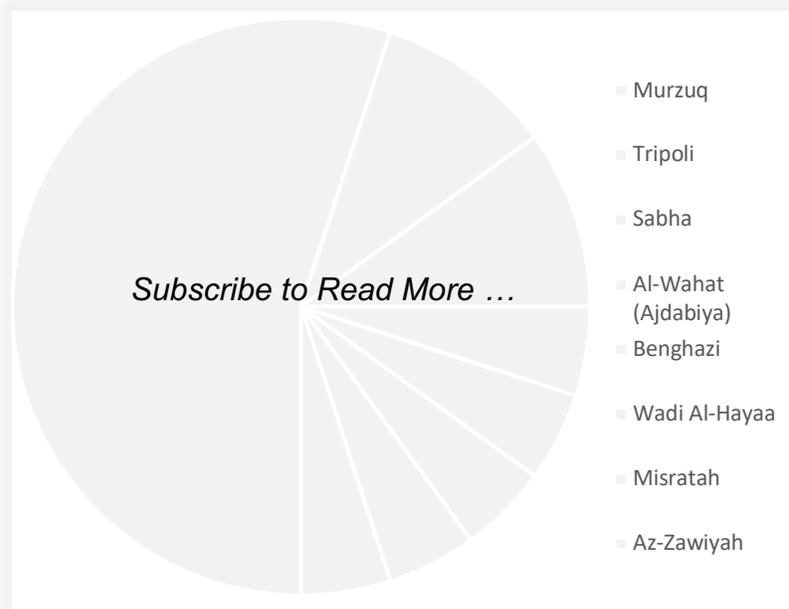
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



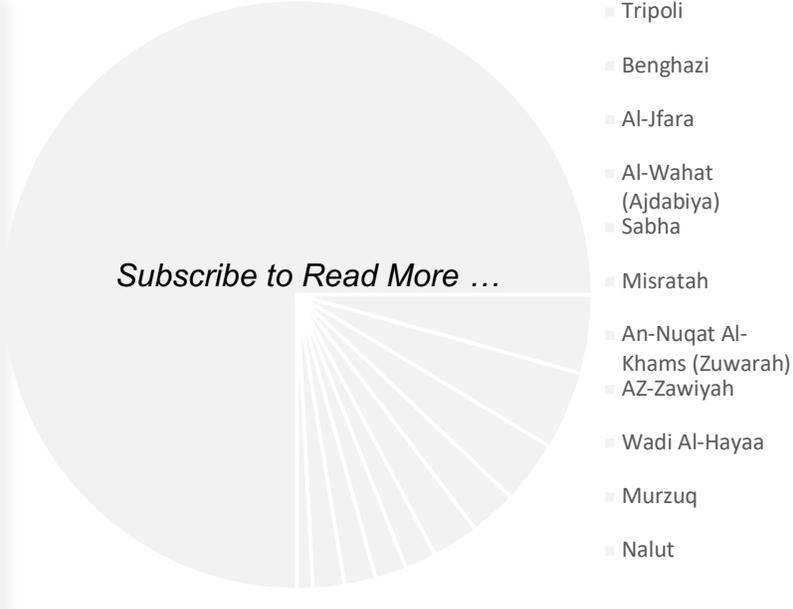
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



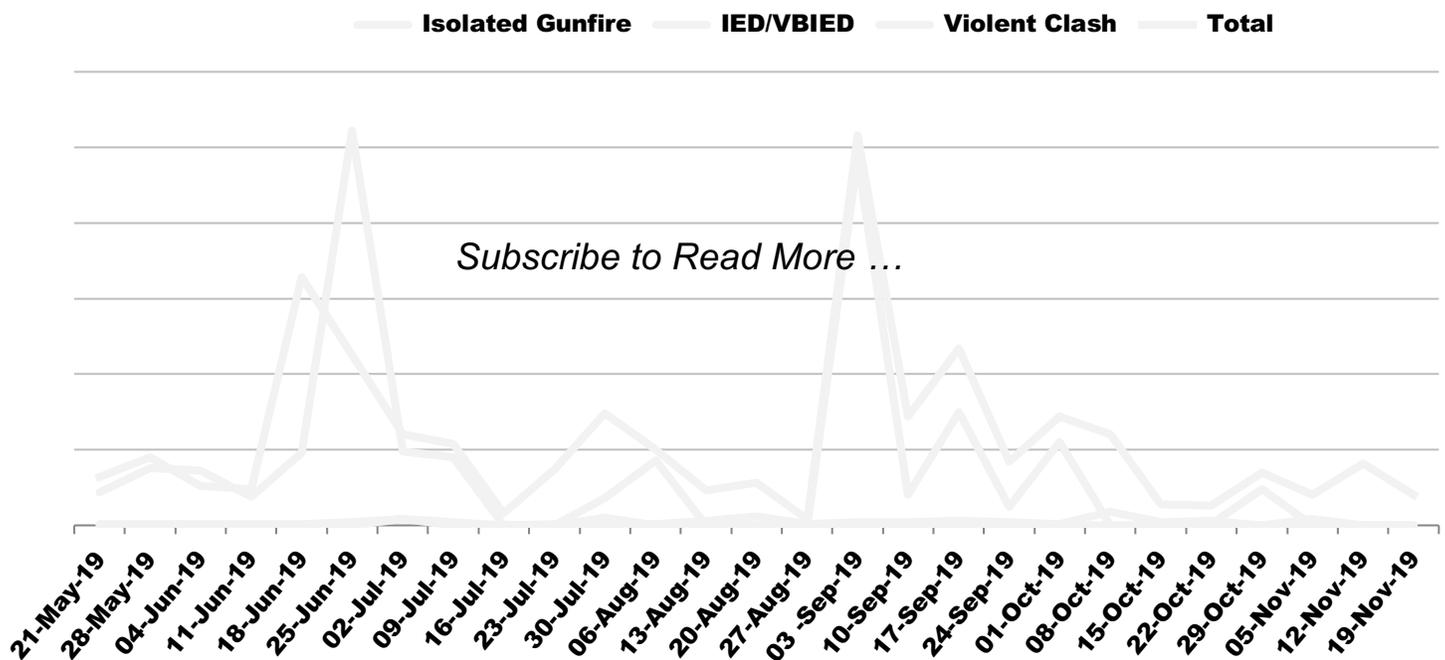
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



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 20 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 41 deaths reported last week and 20 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. This week, WB recorded 12 fatalities as a result of Libyan National Army (LNA) Air Force (LAAF) airstrikes, with the Government of National Accord's Volcano of Rage Operations Room claiming 11 fatalities, including nine children and two women, as a result of an LAAF airstrike targeting the Southern town of Umm Al-Aranib. Meanwhile, four fatalities were recorded as a result of assassinations, in addition to three bodies found and one fatality as a result of a failed carjacking attempt. In relation to ongoing military activity, this week witnessed an increase in violent clashes, airstrikes, mortar/rocket shelling incidents coinciding with intensified ground operations. Among the airstrikes conducted, WB recorded an LAAF airstrike targeting an airstrip in Kabaw located in the Nalut district of the Western Mountain region. Meanwhile, the highest number of security incidents remained in Tripoli, followed by Benghazi, Al-Jfara, and Ajdabiya, with an ongoing increase in security incidents recorded in the latter. Several security incidents were recorded throughout the country including 34 violent clashes, 24 mortar/rocket shelling incidents, 12 explosions heard, 12 airstrikes, 10 arrests, 5 isolated gunfire cases, 3 assassinations, 3 cases of bodies found, 2 protests, 2 robberies, 2 drones heard, 2 kidnappings, 1 raid, 1 attack & 1 carjacking.

In Western Libya, WB recorded a total of 100 incidents, including 87 in Tripoli, marking an overall increase in security incidents recorded across the region, particularly in Tripoli, in contrast to last week. In Tripoli, beyond military activity, sources reported several internally displaced families arrived at Tripoli University's student accommodation to seek refuge after they fled their houses located on Tripoli's frontlines on 25 Nov. The development would follow an additional batch of internally displaced persons (IDPs) seeking refuge in an uncompleted building on Al-Sekka Road and Naser Street last week. In a related development, WB sources reported dozens of IDPs, mostly women, protested in front of the Prime Minister's Office at approximately 1100hrs on 25 Nov. The IDPs denounced the lack of assistance by the GNA PM, Fayez Al-Serraj. The protestors also called on the deputy PM, Ahmed Maiteeg, to host IDPs at his hotel. Further, IDPs reportedly protested in Algeria Square at approximately 0900hrs on 26 Nov. In the wider Western region, sources reported LAAF airstrikes targeting Janzur area at approximately 1100hrs. Initial reports indicate the airstrike targeted Mobile National Force HQ near 17 Bridge. Separately, unidentified gunmen killed a man believed to be affiliated with Misrata forces on Garaboli's coastal road in the early hours of 24 Nov. Pro-LNA accounts reported the victim was Ahmed Zaeba and was assassinated by LNA sympathisers.

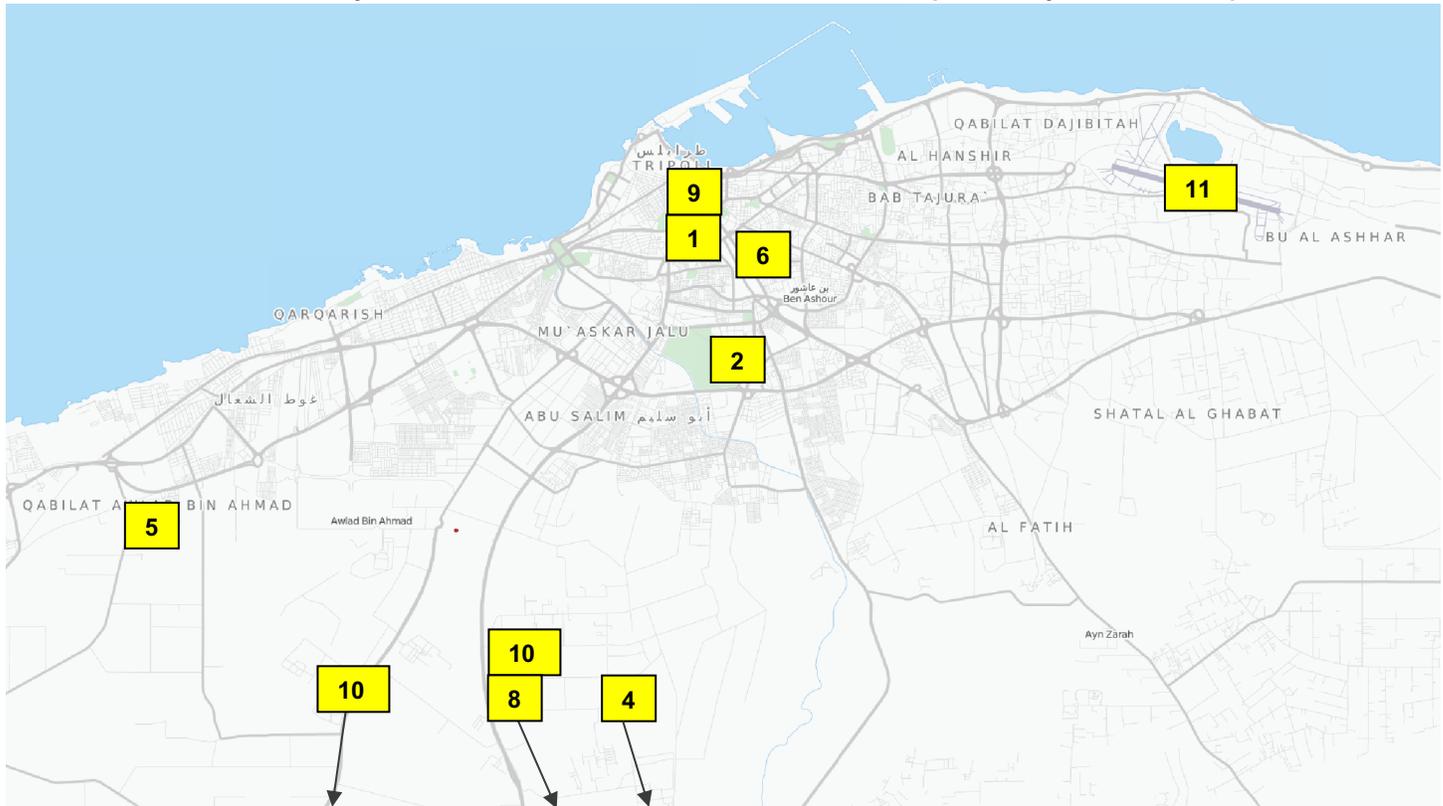
In the central region, though not reflected in this week's data set, Sirte's Protection Force (SPF) reported an LAAF airstrike targeted the Feed Factory in Sirte's Sabaa area at approximately 1600hrs on 01 Dec. The SPF noted material damage as a result, though no casualties were recorded. Meanwhile, reports indicate additional LAAF airstrikes targeted Sirte in the early hours of 02 Dec.

Turning to the South, beyond the GNA attack targeting Al-Feel Oilfield and LAAF airstrikes that followed, reports indicate two men were found killed in Sabhā's Nasriya area at night on 25 Nov. Separately, reports indicate four masked gunmen driving a gray Hyundai Sonata kidnapped a 6-year-old child in front of a school in Sabha's Al-Hajarah area. Beyond, reports indicate three gunmen carried out a failed robbery attempt targeting a jewellery shop in Sabhā in the afternoon on 27 Nov. The gunmen reportedly fled the scene after the shop owner opened fire on them. No casualties were recorded.

In the East, beyond a series of arrests recorded in Benghazi, rumours circulated suggesting a man's body reportedly found hand-shackled in a forest in Al-Abyar near Benghazi, belonged to the LNA's former Tripoli Operations Room commander, Abdelsalam Al-Hassi. In response, pro-LNA media outlets denied the reports and confirmed that Al-Hassi is in good health.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Deadly LAAF airstrike in Swani; MJI to reportedly resume ops. on 12 Dec



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (23 Nov) Ghneiewa militia kill man affiliated with ex- Ghneiewa militiaman
2. (24 Nov) Sources deny GNA call to evacuate school in front of Rixos Hotel
3. (24 Nov) GNA Mol announce arrest of drug traffickers
4. (24-25 Nov) Indiscriminate shelling; clashes concentrated in Hadba Mashro
5. (25 Nov) Armed group kidnaps Libyan businessman in Al-Serraj
6. (25 Nov) Internally displaced persons (IDPs) protest in front of PM Office
7. (26 Nov) DoS warns over heightened risk to civil aviation amid Tripoli clashes
8. (26-27 Nov) GNA repels LNA advance on Naqliya Camp; GNA reinforcements
9. (27 Nov) Drive-by shooting near Molay Mohammed Mosque
10. (28 Nov) RPG/gunshots fired during dispute b/w locals & Zintan militias
11. (28-29 Nov) Indiscriminate shelling targets MJI
12. (01 Dec) LAAF airstrike targets Al-Swani resulting in civilian casualties

Deadly LAAF airstrike in Al-Swani

Military activity was marked by a Libyan National Army (LNA) Air Force (LAAF) airstrike targeting Al-Swani resulting in the death of five children and the injuries of 10 others at approximately 1630hrs on 01 Dec, according to the Government of National Accord's (GNA) Volcano of Rage Operations Room. Initial reports indicate the LAAF airstrike targeted GNA positions near Al-Swani Bridge. WB sources confirmed the damage of two civilian houses and several vehicles, in addition to the death of a woman and child. The Presidential Council (PC) condemned the airstrikes on 02 Dec.

Tensions between Zintan militias & locals

WB sources reported several explosions due to rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) fired, followed by sporadic gunfire, in Hay Al-Andalus and Gorje areas between 2200hrs-2230hrs on 28 Nov. Initial reports indicate a dispute erupted between Zintan militias and locals on Gorje's main road, specifically near Al-Sharara Gas Station, prompting a road closure for approximately 10 minutes. Sources reported residents of the area are dissatisfied with the Zintan militias drug use at their camp located near the Al-Sharara Gas Station.

Drive-by shooting & assassination

WB sources reported brief gunfire on Al-Jamahirriyah Street at approximately 0100hrs on 27 Nov. Initial reports indicate a white Toyota pick-up vehicle carried out a drive-by shooting near Molay Mohammed Mosque. The incident came

two days after the Ghneiewa militia reportedly assassinated a young man due to his alleged affiliation to a former Ghneiewa militiaman, Abu Azza, near Molay Mohammed Mosque. Abu Azza, formerly commanding the Protection Force Apparatus, which was dissolved by the Ghneiewa militia commander, was reportedly killed in clashes with Ghneiewa militiamen in Tripoli on 07 Jul.

Businessman kidnapped; cameraman released

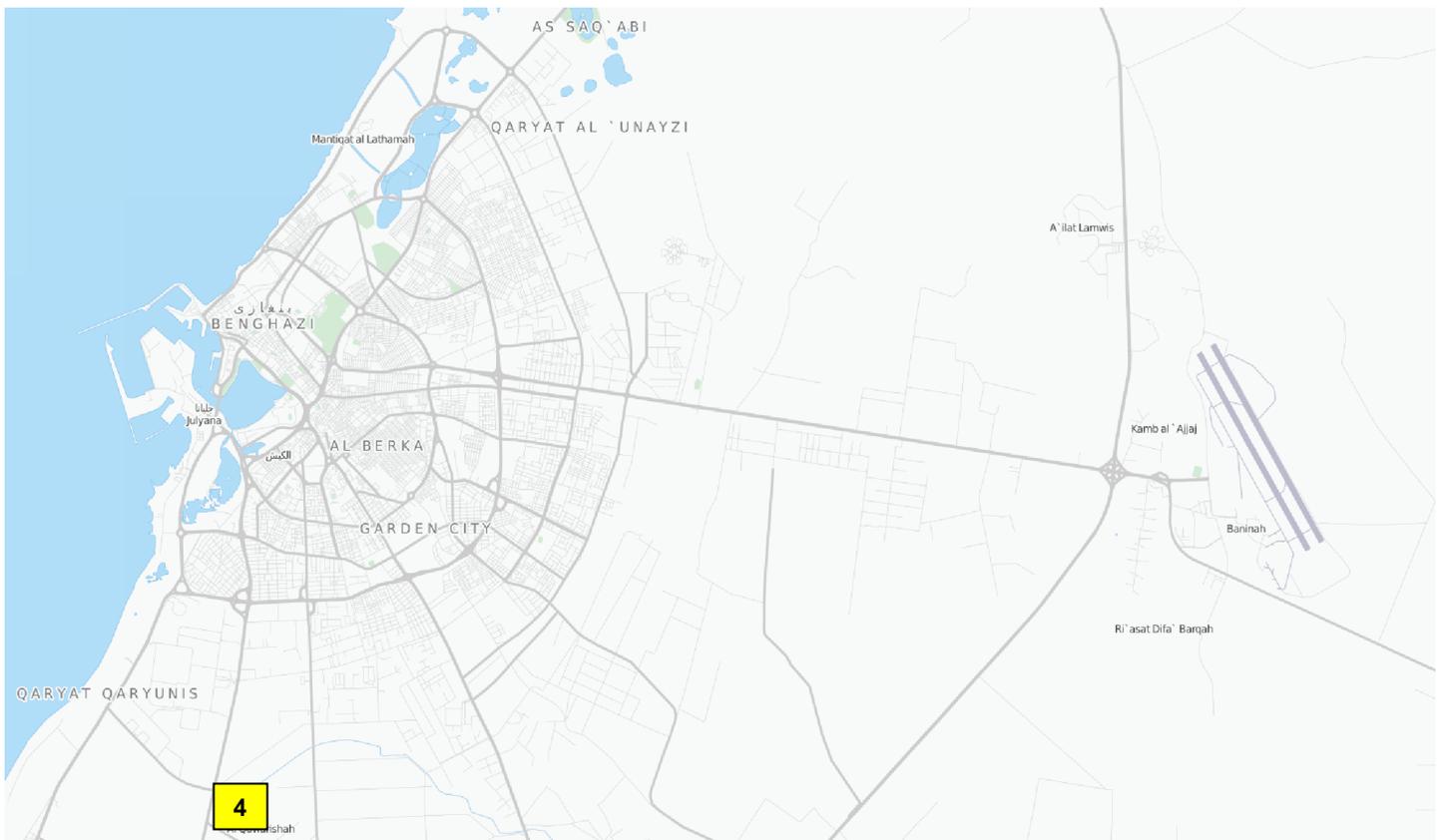
Reports indicate an unidentified armed group kidnapped a Libyan businessman, identified as Abdulaziz Basheer, in front of his company in the Al-Serraj area in broad daylight on 25 Nov. Neither the identity of the assailants nor the motive behind the incident are known. Separately, a Libyan cameraman, identified as Mohammed Al-Busaifi, confirmed his release via his personal Twitter account after he was reported missing in Tripoli on 23 Nov. Al-Busaifi did not provide any further details.

GNA transport official: MJI to reopen on 12 Dec

The GNA's deputy transport minister, Hisham Bushakiwat, stated that Mitiga International Airport (MJI) will resume flight operations on 12 Dec following the completion of maintenance works and security preparations at the airport. The new proposed date comes two weeks after the airport's management announced a delay in resuming flight operations due to incomplete maintenance works. Of note, indiscriminate shelling targeted MJI for two consecutive days between 28-29 Nov, though the party behind the attack remains unknown.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

Security forces follow through with crackdown on criminal gangs



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (24 Nov) Migrant workers seized with drugs in house raid
2. (30 Nov) Criminal gang specialized in cross-border migration arrested
3. (30 Nov) Prominent criminal gang involved in murder & theft arrested
4. (30 Nov) Libyans & Egyptians arrested for stealing GECOL cables

Series of arrests

The Criminal Investigation Department of Benghazi's Security Directorate arrested a criminal gang specialized in illegal cross-border migration on 30 Nov. The gang reportedly smuggles illegal migrants into several cities, including Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Bani Walid and Sabratha. The directorate noted that the gang operates through forged contracting companies in coordination with a group headed by a female in Egypt. Separately, Benghazi's Security Directorate arrested three individuals attempting to assassinate a local and subsequently steal his cash on 30 Nov. According to the directorate, the suspect plotted to kill the man after he was dismissed from work for stealing. Police forces ambushed the suspects as they were on their way to commit the crime after receiving intelligence on their whereabouts. Following interrogations, the suspects confessed to the charges against them.

Separately, Benghazi's Security Directorate announced the arrest of a prominent criminal gang involved in several crimes, including murder and theft, on 30 Nov. The directorate stated that up to two members may have fled, whilst the remaining members were captured. The criminals carried out robberies targeting vehicles, shops, women's collectibles, and mobile phones, where they began to carry out

their operations approximately a year and a half ago. Following interrogations, the suspects confessed to committing four murders, including the killing of a Pakistani national and owner of a gold shop, an elderly woman, and a Sudanese woman who was the owner of a salon and was found shot dead near the port. Meanwhile, the suspects did not disclose information on an additional four murders they had carried out. In terms of theft, 200 vehicles were stolen, including state-owned vehicles, whilst over 70 shops were robbed. The gang is made up of young men and women who solely carry out criminal acts in return for financial gains.

Meanwhile, local reports indicate Libyans and Egyptian nationals were arrested for stealing power cables belonging to the General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) on 30 Nov. Security forces raided the suspects' farm and found stolen power cables, cannabis resin (hash), and a pistol along with white weapons, in the Qawarsha area. On 18 Nov, GECOL reported the theft of up to 2600 metres of power cables.

Further, Benghazi's Morality Police raided a house inhabited by migrant restaurant workers, arresting them and seizing cannabis resin (hash) in their possession on 24 Nov. In addition, the police closed down several restaurants and bakeries across the city due to lack of adherence to sanitary requirements.

6. What's next

LNA to focus on local consolidation/alliances amid GNA emphasis on conflict's intl. dimension

POLITICAL FORECAST

This week Kremlin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, rejected recent US claims of Russia playing a destabilising role in Libya in light of an alleged growing presence of Russian mercenaries fighting alongside LNA units, referring to the claims as "bogus stories". Reports quoted Peskov stating that many countries do not have the moral right to discuss Libya's destabilisation after destroying the country through measures violating international law. Meanwhile, in the same context, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) head, Ghassan Salame, noted complications, primarily US-Russia tensions over the alleged presence of "Russian security firms" in Libya complicating inter-Libyan peace talks that could be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in the first half of Jan 2020. Salame's statements were made during an interview with AFP news agency and would highlight how recent reports of growing US-Russia tensions in context of the Libyan conflict could undermine prospects of the upcoming Berlin conference amid a divide in international consensus. Separately, the GNA PM, Fayez Al-Serraj, reportedly met with the Qatari Ambassador to Libya, Sheikh Mohammed bin Nasser Al Thani, where Al-Serraj voiced his appreciation for the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani's support for the GNA in defending the LNA's Tripoli offensive. Al-Serraj also highlighted the GNA's achievements on both the domestic and international levels, attributing this success to its forces and supporters from "friendly and brotherly countries", in reference to Turkey and Qatar. Prior to the latter and following a circulated statement by the Presidential Council (PC)'s Media Office on a meeting between Al-Serraj, and the King of Bahrain, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, in Manama, Bahrain, to discuss bilateral relations and Libya's current situation, Bahrain's FM, Khalid Bin Ahmed, denied that any political talks were held with Al-Serraj. The development undermines the authenticity of PC claims in regard to foreign visits, particularly in the current climate.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

In an article for "Bloomberg", the author, Ben Fishman, lays out the opportunity for the US to play a significant role in countering Russia's threat to tilt the balance of power and extend its presence on NATO's Southern flank via a final international push for a political solution, or alternatively accept Russia's growing influence. "First, the administration should shed more light on Russia's actions in Libya, to the extent that it can without compromising intelligence sources. Various Libyan and Western officials have cited the presence of between 200 and 1,400 Russian private military contractors, most belonging to the Wagner group linked to one of Vladimir Putin's close associates. The U.S. should provide an official estimate of the number and share what it can about their deployment and impact. Russia benefits from the deniability of Wagner; the U.S. should take away that advantage. Second, the U.S. should threaten to sanction all groups involved in providing arms to Libya, including arms suppliers, shipping companies and insurers. To date, the arms embargo continues to be violated with impunity. The administration has existing authorities to sanction actors who "threaten the peace, security, or stability of Libya," and the House and Senate have proposed legislation to support such sanctions, particularly against Russia. So far, these sanctions have been applied by both the Obama and Trump administrations only to internal Libyan actors. Finally, the U.S. must vigorously back the Berlin Conference intended to unite international support for a ceasefire and reconvene a Libyan political dialogue. To do this, the U.S. must lean heavily on its partners in Abu Dhabi, Cairo, and Ankara to commit to at least a pause in arms shipments — or face potential sanctions. Exposing and isolating Russia in its attempts to tilt the balance of power in Libya may be the best way to stop its attempts to increase its influence in North Africa. As the Trump administration itself acknowledges, that goal is profoundly in the U.S. strategic interest."

SECURITY FORECAST

This week clashes continued with an absence of significant developments on the ground, though the LNA intensified its air campaign whilst focusing on ground assaults South of Tripoli towards the centre. The LNA achieved brief gains in Khallat Al-Forjan and Hadba Al-Mashro areas, with clashes occasionally reaching the Southern part of Salah Al-Din. The LNA appear to be focusing on both fronts in a likely attempt to seize the Salah Al-Din traffic light crossroads, which marks a key position that could lead to additional advances Southwards. The LNA also focused ground assaults in Garabolli and Al-Aziziya and further advanced in Al-Heera area towards Swani. Meanwhile, an uptick in criminal activity was reported in Al-Serraj, Syad, An-Najila, Soug Al-Sabt, Aziziya, Al-Seyaheya and Gorje areas over the past week. This week also saw IDPs protesting across Tripoli amid growing numbers fleeing attacks on civilian-populated areas. A growing IDP presence could result in ramifications on the security environment on the ground. Meanwhile, locals resorted to road closures along Surman's Coastal Road in protest against an LNA-Zawiya prisoner exchange excluding their relatives. This week also saw renewed attacks on Mitiga International Airport (MJI), though officials reported 12 Dec as the airport's reopening date. Additional attacks on MJI ahead of its planned reopening date remain probable. Beyond, Tripoli's clashes continue to increase tribal tensions in the wider Western region, with reports of a CP targeting Tarhuna locals in Msallata. Meanwhile, the LNA's intensified air campaign saw airstrikes on an airstrip in Kabaw, in the Western Mountain and renewed airstrikes targeting Sirte, as well as airstrikes targeting Al-Feel Oilfield, Umm Al-Aranib, and Tsawah Wadi Otbah in response to a GNA-affiliated attack on Al-Feel Oilfield. Reports of casualties as a result of the airstrikes have already prompted protests in the area. Meanwhile, ground confrontation remains possible in the central region around Sirte and Al-Jufra, which could subsequently impact the Oil Crescent region.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

In an article for the "Oil Price", the author, Julianne Geiger, highlights how the latest attack on Al-Feel Oilfield marks a renewed battle for Libya's oil. "The past two days have seen forces loyal to Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA) seize and then lose a key oilfield in the south, suggesting that General Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) is still the king of the country's oil. On Wednesday, the GNA announced it had taken control of the El Feel oilfield, which produces about 70,000 bpd, pushing Haftar's forces out. Later that same day, Haftar's LNA launched airstrikes at the gates of the facilities, retaking the oilfield without causing any damage. On Thursday, forces loyal to Haftar said that Chadian forces working for the GNA were preparing to attack the nearby Sharara oilfield, the country's largest, Reuters reported. LNA warplanes claim to have repelled the attack, though this could not be confirmed independently. Production at El Feel had been suspended on Wednesday, but was gradually restarting by Thursday, as confirmed by the Libyan National Oil Company (NOC). No NOC staff were harmed in the fighting, and facilities suffered only minor damage. In a statement on Thursday, NOC Chairman Mustafa Sanalla said: "I remind all parties that Libya's oil and gas fields are vital sources of revenues for the benefit of all Libyans. They must not be treated as military targets. Any fighting in the vicinity of any of our facilities forces us to cease production, in order to ensure the safety of our employees. When production ceases, all Libyans lose out." Last week, the Trump administration seemed to be moving towards support for General Haftar following a series of meetings with Eastern Libyan representatives and suggestions that one of Haftar's representatives, Aref al-Nayed, would be expected to play a key role in the new Libyan leadership once Tripoli was "liberated" by the LNA. U.S. support for Haftar has gone back and forth this year. In April, Trump was clearly supporting Haftar's push to take over Tripoli, but by the summer, pressure was on to distance the administration from Haftar's destructive war for the Libyan capital and the mounting civilian deaths."

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