

1. The Big Picture

Haftar's leadership bid marks turning point & could shift alliances

The military environment across Libya's eastern region remains relatively unchanged this week. No major changes to the status quo were recorded across Tripoli's southern frontlines while Government of National Accord (GNA) forces continue to target Libyan National Army (LNA) supply lines across the western region. Building on the recent military momentum, GNA forces fired rocket/mortar shells on Tarhunah and carried out unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) strikes targeting LNA positions across the West, though the number of GNA-operated UAVs downed by the LNA is rising steadily.

But away from combat zones, this week's main development was on the political front. In a televised address on 23 April, LNA commander Khalifa Haftar called on Libyans to choose an executive authority to lead the country's political transition from the current crisis. Haftar urged Libyans to approach local institutions and councils to express their opinion, promising the LNA will respect and implement any public demand. Haftar directly called for scrapping the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA).

Haftar's speech was largely described as a bid to take up reins of a newly-formed military government to lead the transition. The speech immediately sparked pro-Haftar demonstrations across Benghazi and other towns in the east backing the LNA to lead the country. Meanwhile, pro-LNA tribesmen across the country issued statements of support.

Haftar's speech contradicted and closely followed a competing vision laid out by the House of Representatives (HoR) speaker, Aguila Saleh, in a detailed eight-point roadmap to revamp the Presidential Council (PC) and form a new unified government. Haftar and Saleh's conflicting visions led to speculation among critics the move was a coordinated public relations stunt to legitimize military rule. However, there is evidence to suggest the two figures are once again at odds. Haftar's political bid will likely be met with stiff resistance from HoR members and the eastern federalist movement, especially if the LNA commander fails to coordinate his political moves locally.

Beyond the east, the move is particularly sensitive for Haftar's alliance with the former Gaddafi regime supporter base across the country. Of note, WB recorded multiple pro-Gaddafi protests calling for Saif Al-Islam to lead Libya in the immediate aftermath of Haftar's speech. Pro-Gaddafi elements are wary of Haftar's leadership bid and have been instrumental in enabling the LNA to expand its tribal alliances across the country. The situation provides the Tripoli government with the perfect opportunity to exploit divisions, although Haftar will likely seek to provide assurances to the pro-Gaddafi supporter base, especially given the importance of this segment of Libyan society to Moscow's plans in-country.

Overall, the speech raises more questions than answers. At the time of writing, Haftar officially agreed to scrap the LPA in LNA-held territories. It remains to be seen how the move will reverberate across the eastern bloc. The timing is telling; abolishing the LPA before Tripoli is "liberated" is a tacit acknowledgement of the limited military prospects after Turkey's recent engagement and success in the West.

For Haftar, gaining political clout has always been the ultimate objective, although this strategy has so far been limited to small and localised attempts to convert military gains into political credit. The latest speech is a sign Haftar is hedging his bets to guarantee some permanent political gains, at least in the East, if the status quo in Tripoli cannot be altered in the medium term. Meanwhile, abolishing the LPA enables Haftar to prevent dissent in the East.

Alternatively, Haftar's move could be a last-ditch effort in light of the recent military losses in Libya's West, and the pressure from the oil blockade, possibly to justify more funding from foreign backers. In this second scenario, LNA military retaliation may never materialize in the short term. The LNA would instead focus on the political battle; adopting a more passive approach to deter Ankara and confine it to a "foreign aggressor" position. By mobilizing public support, the LNA could compel Turkey to fight under its own terms in Libya. Ankara dislikes political squabbles and prefers a direct military confrontation because it is well aware of its limited political reach in-country and against the larger pro-LNA coalition in the international community. Seen from this angle, the LNA is unlikely to suspend military operations in the short term but could limit their scope and move to a defensive posture to maintain key positions while continuing the political push in the east and south. In this scenario, LNA forces would claim abidance by the humanitarian truce while exposing Turkey's violations to the international community.

In a separate development, internal GNA divisions widened over the reporting period, in spite of the morale boost provided by Turkey's military support. Tripoli's militia landscape continues to be marked by deep mistrust and whistling allegations. Skirmishes erupted as the Special Deterrence Force (SDF) proceeded to arrest Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) members from the old guard with close ties to Haithem Al-Tajouri. The SDF move was sanctioned by Interior Minister Fathi Bashagha, underlining intent to aggressively pursue security sector reforms, though the arbitrary nature of some arrests has led observers to argue the Interior Minister is exploiting the reforms to for personal and pro-Misrata interests.

KEY POINTS

- Coronavirus cases reach 61; GNA eases curfew
- Haftar abolishes LPA in bid to consolidate power
- Bashagha / SDF arrest TRB members



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2. National Security Map

GNA UAV strikes continue to target LNA supply lines; LNA downs several Turkish UAVs in retaliation

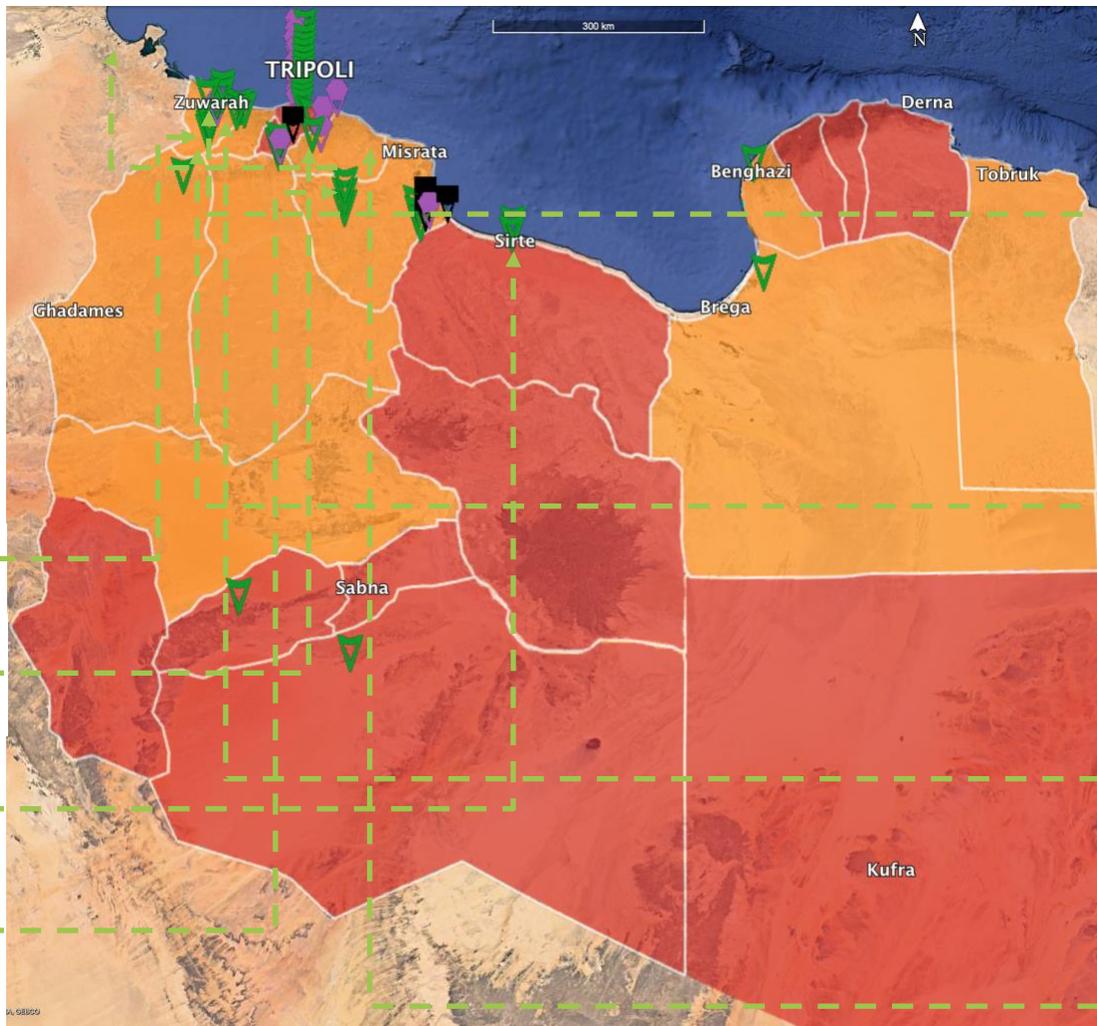
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

- ★ IED | VBIED
- ♦ Violent Clash
- Isolated Gunfire
- ▽ Other



A GNA-operated Turkish UAV targeted Al-Wattiyah Airbase resulting in the death of five LNA forces at approximately 1730hrs on 24 April. The GNA military spokesman, Mohammed Gnounou, reported four airstrikes targeted LNA military vehicles at Al-Wattiyah Airbase.

At approximately 0300hrs on 25 April, reports indicate GNA forces targeted Tarhunah with artillery shells resulting in heavy explosions east of the city.

Sirte's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) reported the arrest of an anti-LNA sleeper cell member planning to carry out operations against LNA forces in the city on 22 April.

A GNA-operated Turkish UAV targeted an LNA supply truck north of Bani Walid at approximately 0130hrs on 25 April. The GNA's Volcano of Rage Operations reported three airstrikes targeted an LNA fuel truck en route to Tarhuna resulting in its destruction, while the LNA claimed the truck was carrying food supplies.

The GNA eased coronavirus curfew restrictions across territories under its control. The curfew will now be implemented from 1800-600hrs until 08 May. The ban on driving was also lifted. Large retail outlets will remain closed and government institutions will operate at 10% capacity between 0900-1400hrs.

Clashes erupted between LNA and GNA forces in Al-Aqrabiya area, south of Al-Jmail, after the GNA launched a failed attack against LNA positions at Al-Wattiyah Airbase, paving the way for an LNA counteroffensive and control over Al-Aqrabiya at approximately 1830hrs on 20 April. Following the failed attack, GNA forces retreated north of Al-Jmail.

LNA units downed a GNA-operated Turkish UAV near Al-Wattiyah Airbase and two Turkish UAVs in Abu Grein in the early hours of 26 April. LNA units claim a fourth Turkish UAV was downed in Wadi Dinar, north of Bani Walid, after it took off from the Misrata Airbase in the afternoon on 25 April. However, conflicting reports indicate the UAV was downed on 17 April.

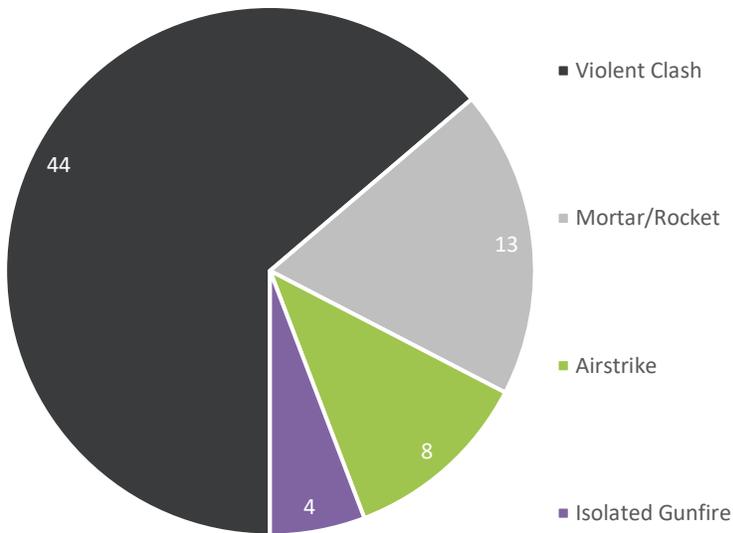
Between 0200-2030hrs on 21 April, an LNA airstrike targeted a GNA military convoy in the Tallil area, the western suburbs of Sabratah. In addition, an LNA airstrike targeted a GNA military convoy in the Rakarikah area, south of Al-Jmail town in the early hours of 21 April. Further, LNA airstrikes targeted a GNA arms depot in Zuwara at approximately 0130hrs and GNA positions in Al-Qaddahiyyah village.

Unidentified gunmen conducted a drive-by shooting resulting in the death of two male relatives Zliten's Al Jum'ah area in the afternoon on 20 April. Unconfirmed reports suggest the gunmen were pro-GNA militiamen and targeted the individuals on suspicions of LNA affiliation.

3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Majority of fatalities related to combat; uptick in GNA airstrikes in Al-Murgub

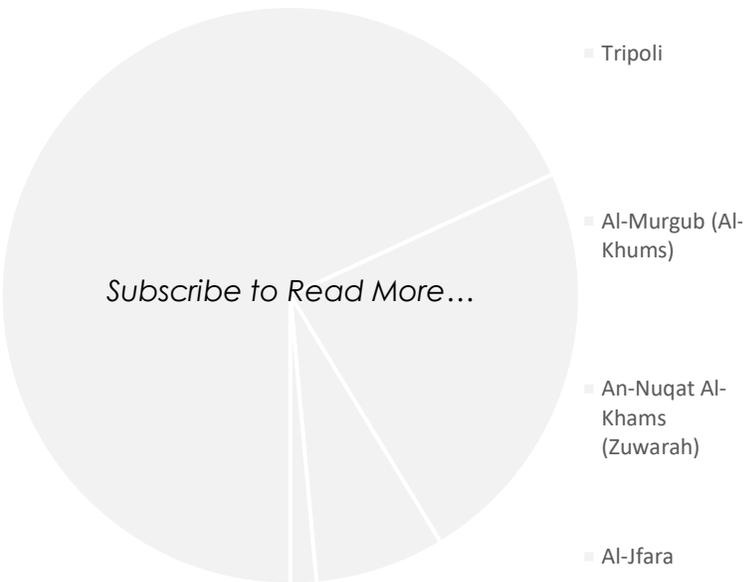
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



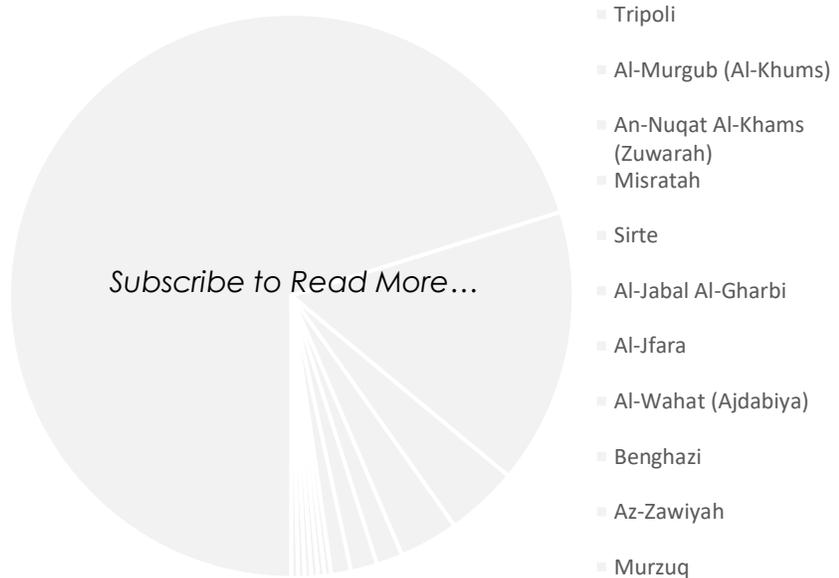
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



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 69 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 146 deaths reported last week and 50 the week before, marking an overall decrease in fatalities in contrast to the previous week. Similar to the patterns witnessed since the Libyan National Army (LNA) launched its offensive on Tripoli in early April 2019, the majority of fatalities remain related to combat operations and are commonly a result of mortar/rocket shelling incidents, airstrikes, violent clashes, and civilians caught in crossfire. Of note, the overall fatality toll would likely stand higher if a verified casualty toll for the ongoing clashes across western frontlines was available. This week WB recorded 44 fatalities among LNA and Government of National Accord (GNA) ranks as a result of violent clashes, 13 civilian fatalities as a result of indiscriminate shelling, eight fatalities as a result of airstrikes and four fatalities due to gunfire-related incidents. Meanwhile, while the number of mortar/rocket shelling incidents and violent clashes dropped this week, WB recorded the number of airstrikes conducted increased from 25 to 35, including 25 airstrikes carried out by GNA forces targeting LNA supply lines and positions across the western region. In retaliation for the GNA airstrikes, the LNA downed four GNA-operated Turkish unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) across the west and near Sirte's borders throughout the reporting period. Several incidents were recorded throughout the country including 101 mortar/rocket shelling incidents and 63 audible explosions as a result, 37 violent clashes, 35 airstrikes, 10 arrests, 9 isolated gunfire cases, 2 robberies, 2 kidnappings, 2 acts of arson, 1 assassination, 1 raid, 1 protest and 1 drone reported flying over the western region.

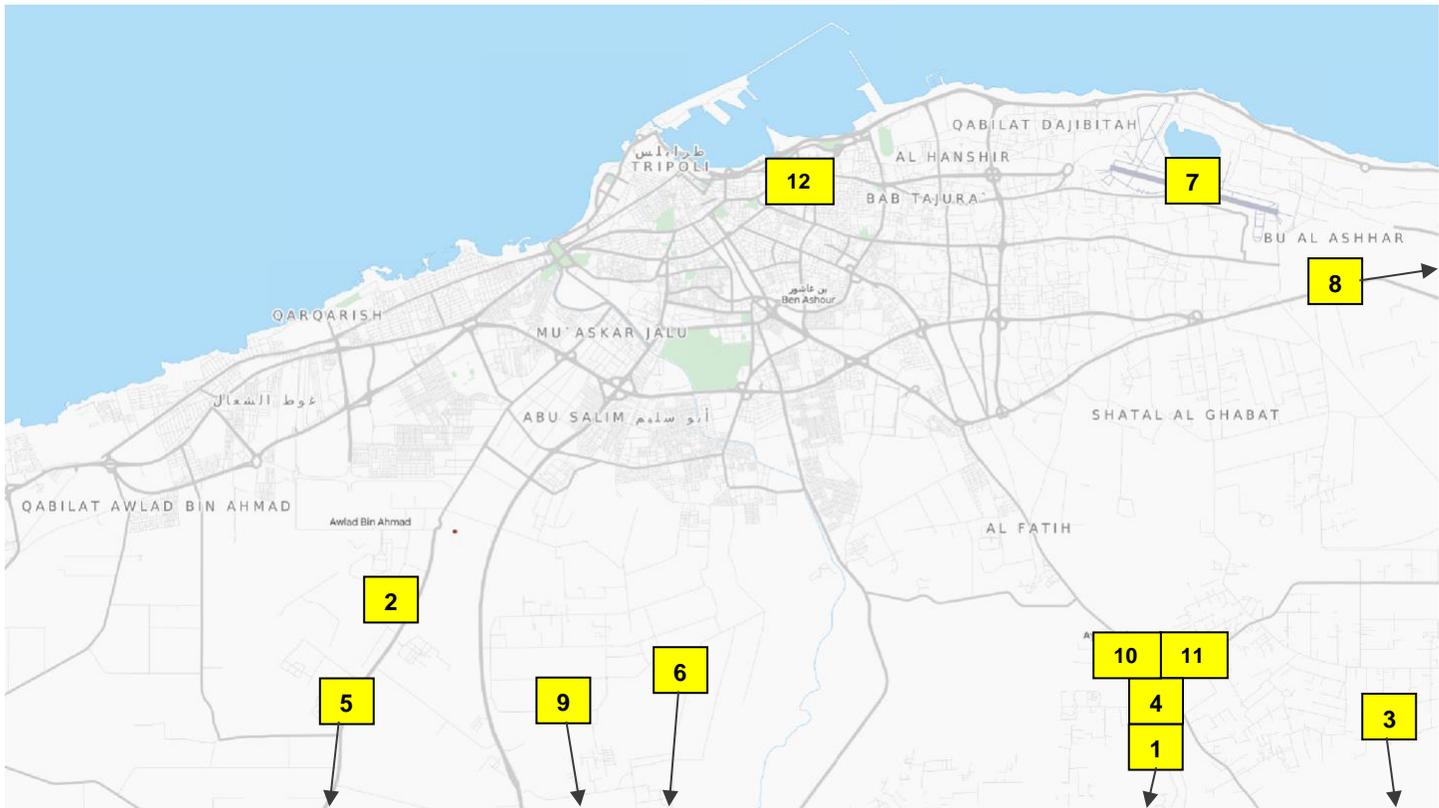
In western Libya, WB recorded a total of 256 incidents, including 186 in Tripoli, highlighting ongoing military operations across the region amid a failed GNA attempt to advance on Tarhuna and subsequent tit-for-tat airstrikes and the downing of UAVs across key frontlines. In Tripoli, WB recorded 82 mortar/rocket shelling incidents and 63 audible explosions as a result, in addition to 33 violent clashes, 5 arrests, 1 robbery, 1 isolated gunfire case and 1 airstrike on the border between Tripoli and Al-Murgub district. In relation to arrests, reports indicate the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Tripoli branch arrested four gang members on charges of theft on the Wali Al-Ahd Road in Tripoli's Airport Road area on 21 April. The criminals stole vehicles and robbed civilian houses in the area. Separately, WB sources reported the Special Deterrence Force (SDF) and Nawasi Brigade arrested at least 15 locals on Al-Sedra Road in Ain Zara on charges of providing the LNA with coordinates. Beyond, this week's arrests in Tripoli were dominated by the SDF arresting high-ranking Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) members as per the orders of the GNA Interior Minister. In the wider western region, the security environment continues to be dominated by ongoing combat operations with an increase in security incidents in Al-Murgub district this week due to the GNA's failed advance on Tarhuna and subsequent airstrikes and shelling by both warring sides in the area. Meanwhile, the GNA continued to target the LNA-controlled Al-Wattiyah Airbase in the An-Nuqat Al-Khams district resulting in the death of five LNA forces. Beyond military operations, WB continued to record sporadic criminal acts. Reports indicate indiscriminate gunfire killed an elderly man and wounded his two sons as they attempted to enter their farm in the engagement area of Al-Saadeya, north of Al-Aziziyah, in the afternoon on 20 April. While there is no further information available, the victims were likely caught in crossfire while attempting to visit their property after previously evacuating due to the clashes. Separately, reports indicate a dispute erupted between two drivers after a minor road traffic accident in which one of the drivers was shot dead in Msallata's Moamen area in the evening on 22 April. In an act of retaliation, reports indicate the victim's relatives set fire to two houses belonging to the killer's family and evicted them from the area. Further, local reports indicate four vehicles affiliated with the GNA's Health Ministry en route to southern municipalities were stolen in Gharyan on 23 April. According to Gharyan's security forces, the vehicles were carrying medical equipment destined for the aforementioned areas in an effort to help contain the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Meanwhile in the central region, this week Sirte's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) reported the arrest of an anti-LNA sleeper cell member planning to carry out operations against Haftar's forces in the city on 22 April. According to the Department's Media Office, the member was tasked with purchasing weapons and recruiting a sleeper cell to destabilise the security environment across the city. In a recorded confession, the suspect identified the leaders of the sleeper cell as Mahmoud Bayou and Faraj Al-Abdali who had commissioned him to purchase weapons and recruit a large number of young individuals to carry out operations inside the city. The suspect stated that he is a member of the "Youth of Sirte Battalion" led by Bayou from Misrata and commanded by Al-Abdali from inside Sirte. Separately, the GNA's Health Ministry condemned the assault and kidnapping of doctors and medical personnel working at Sirte's Ibn Sina Hospital on 23 April. The Ministry reported that security forces detained two doctors, a nurse, and another member of staff from the hospital. The Ministry called on competent bodies in Sirte to facilitate the abductees immediate release. Beyond, pro-Haftar and pro-Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi demonstrations were held in Sirte on 25 April. Reports indicate the Gaddafi demonstrators were dispersed by security forces.

Turning to the south, reports indicate a man belonging to the Tuareg tribe was reported missing in Awbari on 20 April. According to reports, the man was kidnapped upon leaving work at the Ubari General Hospital. Separately, the Municipal Council of Taraghin reported that the Municipal Health Services Department director, Ibrahim Saleh, was subject to an assassination attempt on 23 April. According to the Council, the victim suffered a hit to the back with an unidentified sharp object resulting in his serious injury. Meanwhile, to the east, medical staff protested employee grievances in Ajdabiya, while an arrest targeted a criminal gang in the city of Benghazi.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

LNA advances in Ain Zara & Garabolli; TRB-SDF tensions over high-profile arrests



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (19-20 Apr) LNA advances on Ain Zara axis reaching Al-Qabaliya area
2. (19 Apr) Shells land on GECOL HQ injuring security guard & injuring six others
3. (20 Apr) GNA reports LNA shelling of field hospitals in Wadi Rabei injures 5 paramedics
4. (20-21 Apr) Brief LNA advances in Ain Zara's Qbayliya area
5. (21 Apr) LNA targets GNA arms depots in Al-Kreymia with over 40 shells
6. (21 Apr) Shells land on farms/houses in Qasr Bin Ghashir killing eight inc. Sudanese workers
7. (22 Apr) Shells land Shurfat Al-Mulaha & Weryama areas in MJJ vicinity wounding two
8. (22-23 Apr) LNA advances on Garabolli axis after arrival of Tariq Bin Ziyad to frontline
9. (24 Apr) LNA reports GNA attack on Wildfire Garden area repelled
10. (24 Apr) GNA reports LNA shelling of Ain Zara kills two Libyans & Nigerian worker
11. (25 Apr) Skirmishes between GNA forces in Ain Zara; SDF assassinates DMSC member
12. (25-26 Apr) Skirmishes between SDF & TRB over arrest of TRB militiaman
13. (25 Apr) PC extends curfew for 10 ten days from 0600-1800hrs

TRB-SDF tensions over high-profile arrests

In the latest sign of infighting among pro-GNA Tripoli-based militias, WB sources reported heavy explosions and gunfire as the Special Deterrence Force (SDF) raided the house of a Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) militiaman known as "El-China", and arrested him on charges of communicating with the TRB leader, Haithem Al-Tajouri, in Al Dahra area between 0000-2330hrs on 26/25 April. Heavy explosions and gunfire were audible in Tripoli's downtown and Al-Noofleen areas during the raid. Unconfirmed reports allege the SDF assassinated El-China. In response, a state of anger was reported among TRB members based in their camp in the Zawiyat Al Dahmani area, where they gathered at the Zawiyat Al-Dahmani Roundabout and fired indiscriminately into the air. Subsequently, skirmishes erupted between SDF members positioned at Al-Quba Al-Falakia Roundabout and the TRB after the former attempted to expel Tajouri's forces from their military camp. Sporadic gunfire was audible in the aforementioned areas until 0130hrs. In a possibly related incident, heavy sporadic gunfire was reported in Sabaa and Al-Furnaj Roundabout areas at approximately 0200hrs. Of note, the arrest was ordered by the GNA Interior Minister, Fathi Bashagha and fueled by growing tensions between the Minister and the TRB leader who has been absent from frontlines and long accused of cooperating with the LNA's Khalifa Haftar. Meanwhile, the TRB issued a statement on its Facebook account denying tensions with the SDF and reaffirming that the skirmishes erupted between offshoots operating outside of the militias's official ranks. The statement lent credence to the assessment the tensions are part of attempts by the reformed pro-Bashagha TRB to remove the old

guard linked to Al-Tajouri. Of note, the TRB has long been suffering a leadership crisis.

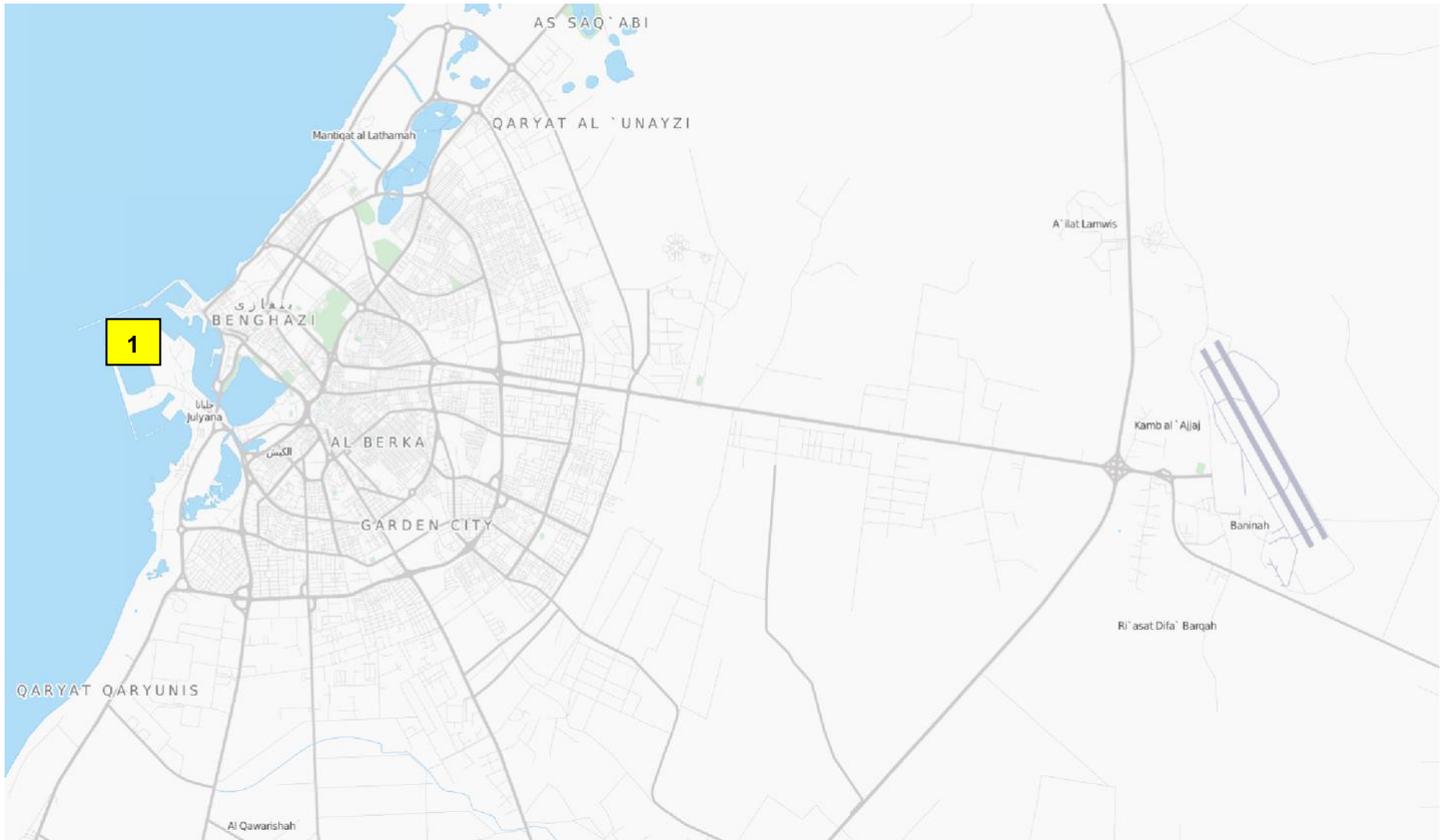
Separately, on 21 April, following the orders of Basghagha, the SDF ambushed and subsequently arrested two prominent TRB commanders, including the right-hand of the TRB leader, Adham Nasouf, and the 92 Battalion leader, Hani Musbah, at an SDF-manned checkpoint in front of Tripoli University Hospital near Al-Furnaj Roundabout in the evening on 21 April. Reports indicate the TRB commanders were aboard the same vehicle. Of note, the arrest came hours after the high-ranking TRB commanders published hostile posts against Bashagha via their personal Facebook accounts. Additional reports indicate Musbah was accused of treason on the Ain Zara frontline after reportedly allowing the LNA to advance and reach Al-Qabailiya area in recent days. As a result of the arrest, tensions were high on the Ain Zara frontline with the TRB threatening to withdraw its forces if the two commanders fail to be released. Existing tensions between Bashagha and Tripoli militias, particularly the TRB and Nawasi Brigade, have reached unprecedented levels during the current clashes in Tripoli. Acts of retaliation remain probable in the short-term.

7 Million LYD allegedly stolen by Misrata faction

Pro-LNA accounts alleged Misrata armed factions stole 7 million Libyan dinars (LYD) in Al-Kreymia area at approximately 1100hrs on 21 April. The reports suggest the cash was intended to be delivered to GNA forces led by Osama Juwaili, the Western Military Region commander. In addition, reports suggest the Misrata armed factions killed the forces tasked with delivering the cash during the robbery. Incidents surrounding the theft of large amounts of cash destined for various local forces commonly lead to strong acts of retaliation.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

LNA interrogates pro-GNA Syrian mercenaries & Egyptian militant captured in Tripoli



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (20 Apr) LNA captures pro-GNA Syrian mercenaries in Tripoli & transfers them to Benghazi
2. (22 Apr) LNA Military Intelligence captures prominent Egyptian militant in Tripoli & transfers him to Benghazi
3. (22 Apr) Health Ministry announces recovery of first COVID-19 patient
4. (22 Apr) Curfew timings altered throughout holy month of Ramadan
5. (22 Apr) CID arrests four criminals involved in acts of robberies
6. (22 Apr) Benghazi Port authorities destroy illicit narcotics shipment

Haftar speech prompts pro-LNA demonstrations

Pro-LNA accounts reported pro-Haftar demonstrations were held across Benghazi's streets at night on 23 April following Haftar's speech calling to withdraw recognition of the Government of National Accord (GNA) and for the public to choose the institution they best see fit to lead the country in his latest attempt to rally public support. Pictures circulated across social media outlets of demonstrators carrying slogans denouncing the GNA and its Prime Minister, Fayez Al-Serraj. Additional reports indicate a demonstration was held in front of Haftar's residence in Benghazi's Zaytouna vicinity, calling on Haftar to assume power. Similar pro-Haftar demonstrations were held in Marj, Ajdabiya, Sirte and Suluq.

LNA captures prominent aide to Egyptian militant

The LNA spokesperson, Ahmed Al-Mesmari, reported the LNA's Military Intelligence Department arrested the right-hand man of Egyptian militant, Hesham Ashmawi, in Tripoli and transferred him to Benghazi for interrogations on 22 April. The suspect, identified as Mohammed Mohammed El-Sayed, also known as Mohammed Al-Sanbakhti and Abu Khalid Munir, is considered one of the most prominent militants in Libya and is wanted by Egyptian authorities. Of note, Egyptian authorities executed Al-Ashmawi on terror charges in early March 2020 after he was captured by LNA forces in Derna and later extradited. Reports indicate cooperation is underway between Egyptian authorities and the LNA to hand over El-Sayed.

COVID-19 case recovers

The Interim Government's Health Ministry announced the recovery of the first coronavirus case in Benghazi after the patient was discharged from Al Hawari General Hospital on 22 April.

Curfew timings altered during Ramadan

The eastern-based Supreme Committee for Combatting Coronavirus altered the curfew timings in areas under Interim Government control from 1800-0600hrs throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

Narcotics shipment from Turkey destroyed

Local reports indicate Benghazi Port authorities seized an illegal shipment of 750,000 tramadol pills concealed in a container from Turkey on 22 April. Video footage circulated showing the narcotics being set ablaze and subsequently destroyed.

CID arrests criminal gang

Benghazi's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested four gang members involved in the robbery of a private school and clinic, in addition to other acts of theft on 22 April.

6. What's next

Opposition to Haftar's political move; GNA renews attack against Al-Wattiyah

POLITICAL FORECAST

A flurry of domestic and international political developments is expected in the medium term. Haftar's bold move represents the political response to the GNA's recent escalation but it remains to be seen whether this measure will be complemented by a military escalation. In the absence of a new UN Envoy to take charge of the Libyan file, the LNA is hoping to gain enough political clout before forming an emergency government led by Haftar and vetted by the international community. Rallying public support and presenting Haftar's leadership bid as a Libyan-Libyan solution will make it difficult for any incoming UN Envoy to ignore the seemingly grassroots nature of this political endeavor. Meanwhile, in a clear sign of Turkey's deep engagement in Libya, President Recep Erdogan told his AKP party in a videoconference meeting on 21 April that Ankara "will continue to do all what is necessary to preserve its interests in the Mediterranean region." Internationally, the European Union (EU) and foreign ministers of Germany, France, and Italy issued a joint statement reiterating calls for an immediate humanitarian truce in Libya and for both warring sides to agree to new peace talks in spirit of the holy month of Ramadan. In a separate development, GNA PM Fayez Al-Serraj rejected the EU's operation IRINI tasked with enforcing UN arms embargo on Libya. Al-Serraj extended a letter to the UN Security Council, condemning what he described as a failure to consider Libya's eastern land borders, where weapons and ammunition flow freely into Libya in support of LNA forces.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

Regionally, the opening of a new commercial shipping line between Tunisia's Sfax port and Tripoli will help meet local demand during Ramadan for food products amid disruptions at the Ras Ajdir border crossing. However, some analysts argue there are concerns Tunisia could get embroiled in the Libyan conflict if Turkey exploits the maritime shipping line to transport military or dual use equipment/supplies. Turkey's intent to establish secure supply lines into Libya is high, especially given the challenge posed by the EU's Irini monitoring mission off Libya's coast. Tunisia's political alignment so far with Ankara remains limited to the personal relationship maintained between some Islamists from Ennahda Party and Turkey's AKP party. The alignment is driven by a political agenda as Turkish President Recep Erdogan realises there is a vacuum to be exploited by Turkey across North Africa in general. Observers are of the view Tunisian President Kais Saied is not from the old guard, so he could very well turn a blind eye on covert attempts to use Tunisia as a supply node, especially given the country's need for foreign direct investments (FDIs). However, Tunisia cannot afford to be seen openly supporting Turkey. Meanwhile, Algeria is projected to adopt a similar approach to Tunisia; turning a blind eye but not overtly supporting Ankara. Algeria did not publicly oppose the Turkish intervention in Libya and Turkish investments in Algeria are sizeable. Algiers would not overtly support Erdogan's plans in Libya but at the same time will do nothing to stop them. Algeria does not have complete leverage over Tunisia. If Tunisia and Turkey give enough guarantees that Algeria's southern oil facilities near Libya's borders will remain safe, Algiers will look the other way and enable Turkey to expand its influence in Libya and Tunisia. With Turkey expanding its influence in Tunisia, Algeria's role as a diplomatic mediator on the Libyan file would grow with European capitals, which serves the interests of Abdelmajid Tebboune's presidency.

SECURITY FORECAST

Bashagha-sanctioned arrests across the capital could further exacerbate tensions between pro-GNA armed factions. Skirmishes and other sporadic security incidents remain possible in the medium term across the capital. In relation to combat, Tripoli's frontlines continue to be relatively calm with no major changes to the status quo. LNA forces will continue to prioritise intermittent mortar/rocket shelling against a range of targets. Pro-LNA accounts claim Turkish military officers stationed at Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport (MJI) have installed new jammer devices at the airport, a development that would justify additional LNA mortar/rocket attacks against MJI in the short term. Meanwhile, politically-motivated security incidents are expected during pro-Haftar demonstrations across cities nominally under LNA control in the West. It is clear that the LNA's intent is to rally public support, particularly after recently suffering setbacks in the western region. As a result of these renewed efforts, protests and demonstrations are likely in LNA strongholds, including southern Libya. Separately, GNA forces are expected to continue targeting LNA supply routes in the vicinity of Tarhunah and Bani Walid. Additional GNA airstrikes against Al-Wattiyah airbase are likely as GNA forces attempt to encircle remaining LNA units at the base. Of note, this week was marked by reports of a partial withdrawal of at least one Zintan faction from the base, though the precise motive behind the incident is unclear. Turning to the southern region, the threat of a conflict spillover remains extant.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

HoR speaker Aguila Saleh presented a peace proposal based on eight principles. The proposal, translated by *Libya Herald's* Sami Zaptia, reads as follows: "The return to the Libyan people is a national demand to save Libya and put it on the right path to achieve a state-building on the foundations of justice and equality. To this end, we propose the following: 1) Each of Libya's three regions should choose their representatives in the Presidential Council of Presidents and Deputies, by consensus or by secret vote under the auspices of the United Nations. 2) After its adoption, the Presidential Council nominates a prime minister and his deputies representing the three regions to form a government that will be presented to the HoR for a vote of confidence, and the Prime Minister and his two deputies will be partners in the adoption of the decisions of the Council of Ministers. 3) After the formation of the Presidential Council, a committee of experts and intellectuals is formed to draft a constitution for the country by consensus, after which presidential and parliamentary elections will be held that will result from the adopted constitution, which will determine the shape of the state and its political system. 4) The Libyan National Armed (LNA) Forces are doing their part to protect this country and its security and may not in any way be compromised, and the new Presidential Council shall take over the functions of commander-in-chief of the armed forces during this phase. 5) The House of Representatives continues to exercise its mission and role as an elected legislative authority until a new House of Representatives is elected. 6) The territory from which the President of the Presidential Council is chosen does not choose the Prime Minister. 7) The President of the Presidential Council and his deputies are not entitled to run for the presidency in the first presidential elections. 8) The armed forces have the right to nominate the Minister of Defence. In view of this political split, we see the need to return the trust mandate to its people, the Libyan people, who have the first and last word in determining the country's destiny.

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