

Politics

## Protests in Tunisia's Ben gardane calling for opening Ras Ajdair border with Libya



A number of residents in the border city of Ben gardane organized protests on Saturday evening, demanding the opening of the border crossing of Ras Ajdair with Libya, and finding development solutions for thousands of workers in inter-trade between Tunisia and Libya. A number of activists work in what is known as "inter-trade" between the two countries gathered at Al-Maghreb Al-Arabi crossroads in Ben gardane, calling on the authorities to intervene urgently and coordinate with the Libyan side to accelerate the resumption of their trade, which had been suspended since March 19, after the Libyan authorities closed the border. The Head of the Tunisian Observatory for Human Rights, Mustafa Abdel Kabir, confirmed that the protesters

burned tires in the center of the city, before security units had intervened to disperse them. He said, in a press statement, that "most of the protesters are either merchants working in intra-regional trade or workers in shops that supply goods to Libya," noting that "the continued closure of the border has placed them in forced unemployment and threatens their source of livelihood." Tunisians continue to be prevented from entering Libya, after the Ras Ajdair border was closed, following armed clashes, while Tunisians in Libya were allowed to cross the opposite way, and some individuals were asked to cross via Al-Dhiba Wazen border. The Libyan Ministry of Interior issued "immediate orders to close the border following

what it described as outlaw groups attacking the border's facilities to create chaos." A recent World Bank study estimated the volume of fuel smuggled across the Libyan-Tunisian border at about 495 million liters, representing more than 17% of fuel consumption in the country. The smuggled goods are distributed throughout most of the governorates of southern Tunisia, reaching as far as central Tunisia, which is more than 250 kilometers away from the Ben gardane region, the main supply area. Abdel Kabir expected that "the Ras Ajdair border will be reopened to the movement of individuals and goods in the coming days, after the Libyan side makes the necessary arrangements."

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## Sheikh Al-Garyani's Fatwa: Break Gaza borders to aid brethren

Libya's Grand Mufti, Sheikh Al-Sadiq Al-Garyani, has issued a fatwa demanding the people of the neighbouring countries of Gaza to break into the borders of the besieged Strip and help their brothers. "It is the duty of every single person to defend their brothers, to defend the physical wellbeing of their brothers, to defend Muslims, to defend the sanctity of Muslims, to defend their brothers' mothers and women," the Mufti said during his weekly program on the Tanasuh TV channel on Wednesday. Sheikh Al-Sadiq called on people to gather around these crossings, collectively and individually, and to storm the blockaded enclave in support of its people. He emphasized that it is not permissible to remain idle while their brothers suffer in this way at the hands of their enemies. In his fatwa, the Mufti underscored that the security men at the crossing points around Gaza and the West Bank are forbidden to stand guard and prevent people from crossing the border. "Anyone working in the police or security forces in Jordan and Egypt, it's forbidden for him to stand guard to protect the Zionists." The Sheikh considered those guarding the borders with Gaza as being part of the Zionist forces and participating in the killing of their Muslim brothers, reaffirming that it is forbidden for them to perform this service or engage in such actions, even if ordered by their state. "Such actions will lead them to hellfire and is never permissible," the Mufti said.

Politics

## Menfi reviews political stalemate with French ambassador



President Mohammed Menfi of the Presidential Council (PC) met with the French Ambassador to Libya, Mustafa Meheraj, on Wednesday to discuss political, economic, and security developments

in Libya. According to the PC media office, the talks focused on the High Financial Committee's activities and the outcomes of the trilateral meeting held in Cairo last month.

The parties also deliberated on the PC's initiatives to resolve the political deadlock and facilitate inclusive, free, and fair elections, ensuring the participation of all Libyan factions.

Politics

## US wants to establish temporary diplomatic facility in Libya to make up for closed embassy



A decade after unrest in Libya forced the diplomats of the United States (US) to evacuate the US Embassy in Tripoli – in 2014 – the Biden administration had notified Congress of its plan to restore the US diplomatic presence in Libya. The Biden administration sees a US diplomatic presence in Libya as critical to helping counter Russia’s growing footprint in Africa – knowing that the notorious Russian mercenary group Wagner is still based in different east and south parts of the country under the protection of a US-Libyan citizen Khalifa Haftar and his sons. The US State Department cites a range of “fundamental interests” that warrant a restored US diplomatic presence in Libya, including supporting the United Nations’ push for elections, promoting US trade and investment opportunities and preventing Libya from becoming enmeshed in rising instability across the Sahel region. Yet chief among the reasons for a US re-

turn is Russia’s expanding foothold on NATO’s southern flank. As the United States conducted diplomacy from the sidelines, Wagner Group mercenaries over the years helped cement Russian influence in Libya. A Libyan official spoke to Al Monitor on condition of anonymity, saying: “The Russians are desperate to impose legitimacy on their presence in Libya. They’re using ‘we’re here and the Americans are not’ as a kind of sales pitch.” According to Al Monitor news website; citing a senior official at the US State Department, the Department submitted a formal notification to lawmakers this month, starting what the department expects will be a one-to-two-year process to establish “an interim diplomatic facility” in the Libyan capital of Tripoli. Al Monitor said that the Biden administration’s budget request for fiscal year 2025 seeks \$57.2 million to fund a more robust diplomatic presence in Libya, including

property costs, travel, equipment and security at its facility located in the western suburbs of Tripoli. Former US ambassador and UN envoy to Libya, Stephanie Williams, commented to Al Monitor by indicating that Libya had never been high on the priority list for Washington, “but the US has not been there for many, many years, but you have to start somewhere. The best place to start is with an embassy on the ground.” “It stands to reason that as most other countries including major powers establish their diplomatic presence in Tripoli, the United States should do the same.” The US senior official told Al Monitor. The US has been without an embassy in Libya since its personnel withdrew under heavy military escort in 2014 amid the “Fajr Libya – (Libya Dawn)” war. American diplomats relocated to Malta and later Tunisia, where they now form a remote mission known as the Libya External Office.

Politics

## Speaker claims that Libyan HoR has executive authorities



The Speaker of the House of Representatives (HoR), Aqila Saleh, said that the system in Libya resembles the so-called “Council System or Assembly System,” claiming that the HoR “possesses legislative and executive powers.” This announcement came in an interview with Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper in response to the criticism he had faced after issuing a decision to impose a 27% tax on the sale of foreign currencies, based on the proposal of the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya. Saleh has defended the decision by saying that the HoR appoints senior officials in state institutions, and draws up the state’s general policies as well as other competencies, especially in light of the exceptional circumstances that the country is going through. “These circumstances sometimes require quick measures in order to achieve the public interest as the goal. This matter will be presented to the House of Representatives for approval after ensuring that it is in the interest of the Libyan citizens and economy.” He added. On March 15, Saleh issued Resolution (No. 15) of 2024 imposing a tax on the official exchange rate of foreign currencies by 27% for all purposes until the end of the year 2024, and the Central Bank of Libya directed the banks to implement the decision. This decision sparked widespread controversy in Libyan politics, as members of the House of Representatives demanded the withdrawal of the decision, describing it as “unjust” to the citizens, and that it was ill-considered, stressing that the decision exceeded the authorities of the HoR Speaker that he possessed according to Law (No. 4) of 2014 of the HoR’s bylaws.

Politics

## Germany reiterates readiness to support HNEC



The head of the High National Elections Commission (HNEC), Emad Al-Sayeh, hosted a meeting with the German Ambassador to Libya, Michael Ohnmacht and his accompanying delegation on Wednesday. The HNEC said the purpose of the visit was to assess the Commission’s preparedness for the 2024 municipal council elections and seek international support for Libya’s democratic process. During the meeting, Ohnmacht commended the Commission for its efforts to uphold international election standards and expressed Germany’s willingness to offer technical and advisory assistance to the HNEC in its preparations for the forthcoming elections.

Economy

## Libyan Energy Forum urges a halt of measures that squander sovereign wealth



المنتدى الليبي للطاقة  
Libyan Energy Forum

The Libyan Energy Forum called for stopping any measures affecting sovereign wealth, holding the High Council of Energy, the Presidency of the National Oil Corporation, and the Government of National Unity (GNU) fully responsible for ignoring the official and popular demands calling for “stopping any measures to sign the sale or mortgage of the people’s resources to foreign entities.” The Forum added that it had monitored with concern the successive repercussions related to the energy file in Libya and the corruption that afflicted it, including the unjustified rise in the fuel subsidy bill in foreign currency, as well as the insistence of the GNU and the National Oil Corporation on continuing to barter crude oil for fuel, as well as the issues of fuel

smuggling at an amount exceeding 40% of the amount of crude oil production. The Energy Forum criticized the continuation of negotiations on the agreement to develop the “NC97” space in the Hamada oilfield, in addition to the Emirati partner’s efforts to sell its share in the largest oil refinery in Libya (220.000 barrels per day) to an unidentified third party. It referred to the imminent victory of the Libyan party in the cases filed with the foreign partner, the possibility of bearing the fines and debts, and the return of the entire refinery to the National Oil Corporation, to contribute to the return of normal living conditions to the Ras Lanuf industrial complex, and the operation of ethylene and polyethylene factories.

It explained that the return of the refinery would lead to the launch of manufacturing industries, increase national income, and diversify its sources, with the possibility of developing the refinery, to provide 70% of the local market’s fuel needs. The Head of the National Oil Corporation, Farhat Bengdara, had previously asked the Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah to approve an offer submitted by the Emirati partner in the company “LERCO”, which operates the Ras Lanuf refinery, to sell its share to a third party that it did not identify. Meanwhile, the intention of the GNU and the National Oil Corporation to sign an agreement with foreign companies to develop the Hamada field (NC97) created a nationwide controversy.

Economy



## Central Bank of Libya: Cyberattack has targeted foreign currency online platform

The Central Bank of Libya (CBL) has announced in a statement published on its official Facebook page that the online platform for reserving foreign currency for individuals was subjected to a distributed denial of service (DDoS) cyberattack on Monday, which affected the ability to access the system. The Central Bank of Libya team was able, on Monday evening, to thwart this attack by blocking access to the system to any network address registered outside Libya. The CBL said on Wednesday that the platform had been operating normally since the attack was stopped, as more than (17,900) reservations were completed on Monday alone with a total value amounting to (68 million US dollars). (17,200) reservations were completed on Tuesday with a total value of (65 million US dollars). Meanwhile, the Central Bank of Libya said that the bank’s official website was subjected to a cyberattack of the same type on Wednesday, and it was responding to it to address any future hacks.



Economy

## LIA CEO presents financial reports to Dbeibah

Libya’s Investment Authority (LIA) CEO Ali Mahmoud discussed the accounts and consolidated statements of the institution and its subsidiaries during a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah on Monday. According to Hakomitna platform, Mahmoud briefed the PM on the final accounts and consolidated statements examined by the global company Ernst & Young (EY), as well as the legal measures regarding cases filed against the Authority in several countries, in cooperation with the issues management department and the public prosecutor’s office. Dbeibah emphasized the necessity of completing the audit work and finalizing the institution’s financial statements by the end of 2023, highlighting the importance of presenting this data to all Libyans as the sovereign wealth fund of the state. He also stressed the importance of prioritizing the follow-up on cases filed against the institution in cooperation with relevant state institutions.

Economy

## AGOCO to organize workshop on new oil discoveries in "Cyrenaica Flat"



شركة الخليج العربي للنفط  
Arabian Gulf Oil Company

The Arabian Gulf Oil Company (AGOCO) intends to hold a workshop between the 4th and 6th of next November on the oil and gas potential of the "Cyrenaica Flat" and neighboring areas in eastern Libya.

The workshop aims to invite specialists to study and evaluate the geological and petroleum characteristics of the region, and compare them with neighboring regions, in order to come up with new exploratory methods that may contribute to uncovering the oil potential of the region, according to a statement issued by AGOCO. A member of the company's management committee,

Ahmed Al-Majdoub, said that the company has worked since its establishment to explore for oil and gas in different regions of Libya, and has achieved many successes. He added that the Arabian Gulf Company has risen to the ranks of international companies, stressing that the decision to return to oil and gas exploration in the Cyrenaica region is consistent with its constant endeavor to explore new and abandoned areas.

The statement indicated that the Cyrenaica region was one of the first areas where oil exploration began during the 1950s, but exploration work there stopped for several

reasons, perhaps the most important of which was the huge discoveries made by oil companies during that period in the Sirte oil basin (such as the Sirte, Al-Srir, Al-Nafoura, and other oilfields), and the Hamada oil basin.

It also indicated that the techniques used in that era were not compatible with the complex geological nature of the region. The company explained that it would work through a new perspective and technologies, with the support of the National Oil Corporation, adding that it began this return by starting the work of drilling the exploratory well "A1-75/03."



Economy

## Russian ambassador invites Governor of Central Bank of Libya to visit Moscow

The Russian Ambassador to Libya, Aydar Aganin, invited the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, to visit Moscow to open opportunities of cooperation and communication with the Russian Central Bank.

This invitation came during a meeting on Sunday in the capital, Tripoli, where they discussed the economic and financial situation in Libya, according to the Central Bank's statement on its Facebook page.

Al-Kabir reviewed with Aganin the role of the Central Bank in maintaining financial sustainability, the need for an integrated economic development vision across the private sector, and the importance of agreeing on a unified budget for 2024.

Economy



## Total, ConocoPhillips want double profit in partnership with Libya's National Oil Corporation

The French company Total Energy and the United States' ConocoPhillips: the two foreign partners of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) in the Waha Oil Company fields, requested to increase their profit margin from 6.5% to 13% of their share of production - an equivalent to 40.83%, while extending the validity of the contracts signed with the NOC to 2046.

This is required by the companies in exchange for approving the plan to increase production of the Waha Oil Company's fields, according to a memorandum recently addressed by the NOC Chairman Farhat Bengdara to the Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.

The two companies' request came as a condition for contributing to the plan to develop the Al-Waha Oil Company's fields, according to Bengdara's mem-

orandum, in which he requested the provision of investments ranging from 15 to 20 billion dollars to implement the plan to increase the production of the Al-Waha Oil Company's fields to 850,000 barrels per day, explaining the offer made by the two companies.

Bengdara called for negotiations with the two partners to reach what he described as "mutually satisfactory solutions that guarantee the implementation of the company's development program as quickly as possible," which is the alternative that he preferred over the option that he had described as an isolated risk when implementing the plans to develop the Al-Waha Oil Company's fields due to Legal challenges and disputes with partners, as well as the need to secure sufficient financing.



Health

## Medical Supply branch in the south receives medication shipment

The warehouses of the Medical Supply Authority in the Southern Region received a cargo of dialysis machines supplied by Fresenius, in addition to blood boosters and common and specialized medicines.

A statement by the Ministry of Health said the shipment covers hospitals, specialized centres, and primary healthcare centres spread across the Southern Region.

The ministry also affirmed that the cargo was received and stored according to standard procedures for distribution to healthcare service departments and dialysis centres.



Health

## NCDC extends registration deadline for rare diseases

The National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) has announced an extension of the registration campaign for rare genetic diseases and blood disorders until April 18, 2024.

The centre has advised the targeted demographic to visit its branches located in Souq Al Jumaa in Tripoli, Benghazi, Sabha, Misrata, and Al-Kufra. However, the specific diseases eligible for registration have not been specified.

Additionally, the NCDC emphasized the importance of individuals intending to register their condition to present their national ID number, personal identification, and medical report.



Health

## PM Dbeibah highlights health-care focus in talks with NCDC chief

Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah emphasized that upgrading the service of primary healthcare centres is a priority for his government.

During a meeting with the Director of the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Haider al-Saeh, on Monday, Dbeibah emphasized the necessity of ensuring the availability of all vaccines and serums and developing an appropriate awareness plan.

For his part, Al-Saeh briefed the Prime Minister on the supply timeline and distribution mechanisms for healthcare facilities, reaffirming that all vaccines are available without delay and are supplied by major global companies.



Sports

## Al-Zini inspects Youth Hostel development project in Yafran

Minister of Youth in the Government of National Unity, Fathallah Al-Zini, visited the Youth Hostel in the Municipality of Yafran on Tuesday to assess the progress made in the first phase of maintenance and development works within the newly established facility.

The project targets establishing more than 20 sleeping rooms, multipurpose halls, a reception lounge, and other amenities, while the second phase will involve the construction of outdoor swimming pools and a meeting hall.

During the visit, the mayors of Yafran and Al-Qal'ah discussed proposals from local administrations to increase the number of youth institutions and facilities in both municipalities.



Sports

## Libya's Abu Salim draws Morocco's RS Berkane at CAF Confederation Cup

Libyan Abu Salim club drew Morocco's RS Berkane 0-0 at the Benina Martyrs Stadium in Benghazi on Sunday evening in the first leg of the quarter-finals of the CAF Confederation Cup.

The match witnessed the wasting of opportunities to score, especially on the part of the Mo-

roccan team, which completed the match with ten players after Hamza Al-Moussawi was sent off in the 57th minute for receiving the second yellow card.

Now the team that will qualify for the semi-finals of the CAF Confederation Cup is postponed until the second leg match, which will

be held next Saturday in Morocco.

In order to qualify for the Confederation semi-finals, Abu Salim will have to win the second leg away from home, or secure a draw with any result other than 0-0.

Education



## Ministry of Education to hold Back to School Festival in August

The Ministry of Education of the Government of National Unity has announced that the Back to School Festival for the 2024-2025 academic year will be held next August.

Minister Musa Al-Magarif discussed with the Director General of the Libya International Company for Media Services, Exhibitions and Conferences, the event, which targets the participation of all educational

institutions and companies specialized in educational materials, and during which discounts on educational supplies will be given to visitors, according to the ministry's statement on Facebook.

The two officials also discussed ways to organize an entertainment, educational, and awareness week for pupils and students during the school vacation period in a number of municipalities.



Opinions

## Revolution's Intruders (parasites)

**"The outset is for all; resilience is for the truthful."**

**- Dostoevsky**

By **Abdullah Alkabar**,  
a Libyan political writer and commentator

Not everyone who joined the revolution against the oppressive authority, supported it, and did what he could to end this tyranny, is truly rebelling against injustice, oppression, and the absence of justice, based on a firm belief and firm faith in the necessity of change, after despair of the feasibility of any reforms in power, and that all paths have become blocked. Hence, the revolution becomes inevitable.

They are not the same. Awareness of all the noble values and lofty goals of the revolution is the awareness of the minority, which has acquired a significant share of knowledge and has spent valuable time studying the experiences of people in resisting totalitarianism and tyranny, realizing that their battle is tough, has multiple stages, and its path is longer than a person's lifespan.

The revolution is a battle of generations on several fronts, and toppling the regime is perhaps the easiest step on this path, but it is certainly the decisive one. As for establishing an alternative authority on the basis of justice, democracy, and respect for human rights, it is the most prominent challenge that cannot tolerate failure or regression, because this means failure and the situation returning to a more severe state, worse than it was before the revolution.

This awareness of the issue of the revolution and everything that surrounds it is not realized by the majority that sided with the revolution. Despite their feeling of the burden of the system of oppression and injustice, and despite all the sacrifices they make to push the revolution forward, they fall short of realizing the lofty goals of the revolution, especially if the enlightened elites neglect their role in disseminating awareness among the masses of the revolution's values and firm principles.

The paths of the Libyan revolution did not differ from these general principles of all popular revolutions, despite some peculiarities that distinguished it from other revolutions of the first Arab Spring. The few who are most aware of the lofty goals of the revolution are still a minority, and they have not yielded to the temptations of power, nor have they deviated into searching for their personal interests. As for the intruders (parasites), into the revolution, who joined it for various reasons, some of which can be considered a natural inclination for the movement of the masses, some of them in response to tribal or regional fervor, and others as opportunism to catch the rising ship after the first one sank or almost sank.

These people fall on the road one after another, some of them are attracted by the authority, and often he borrows the same practices of the collapsed authority, and he, too, turns into a petty tyrant. He does not hesitate to suppress, persecute, and liquidate his opponents if he can. For some of them, the revolution ends when they obtain a high position in the new authority, and after they hold some power in their hands, and their private properties increase. Huge sums of money flow into his hands, and his goal becomes to continue rising and collect more.

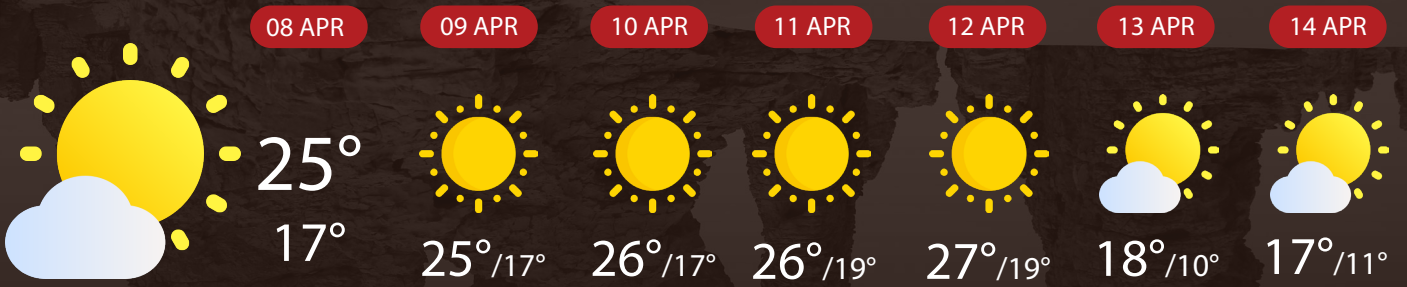
Some others become impatient to achieve change, and despair seeps into their chests, so they throw themselves into the arms of the counter-revolutionary forces, forgetting all the sacrifices, to protect the power, money, and influence they have gained, and rushing to the new tyrants. Hugging him, he asks for forgiveness for what he did against them, defending his failure with all the justifications that, no matter how thick the cover of linguistic rhetoric around them, will not withstand the established truth, which is that resilience and steadfastness belong to the honest, as Dostoevsky said.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer

Photo of the Week



Tripoli Weather Forecast



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