

Politics

Pakistan dismantles network for human trafficking to Europe through Libya

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) of Pakistan has discovered a six-member human smuggling network and arrested gang leader, Saeed Sunyara, who was running the human-smuggling network with the help of his two sons, one residing in Italy and the other in Libya and four others, from his hometown of Gujrat, according to the investigation report into the deaths of Pakistani nationals in an immigrant boat in February this year - which said that Hamza Sunyara, now residing in Libya; Bilal Sunyara, now residing in Libya; Kashif Sunyara, now residing in Libya and Farhan Ali, now residing in Libya, are the rest of Sunyara's network, The Express Tribune newspaper said.

The newspaper added that the arrest was made by the FIA Gujrat Circle after investigation based on the information received from the family members of the victims of the boat accident off the Libyan coast, while en route to Italy four months ago. These Pakistanis were among 67 people, who died, when a migrant boat sank in the Libyan waters near Benghazi on February 26, while they headed towards Italy. Initial reports put the Pakistani death toll to three, but more bodies were recovered later.

"Incidentally, it was the same night when a wooden sailboat sank off the coast of Italy's southern Calabria region, claiming the lives of 67 migrants, including two Pakistanis. The death toll of the Pakistanis later rose to 28. The FIA Gujrat Circle report, presented to their superiors, said that 15 cases were lodged against different human-smugglers, adding that the four teams were constituted to contact the affected families to identify the local agents who booked those people." The newspaper said.

The report indicated that international cooperation has been sought, including assistance from the Italian authorities against the human traffickers residing in Italy, while the process for issuance of international red warrants was being initiated.

"The FIA is also initiating the money laundering proceedings against these accused persons, the report said. The FIA has also approached the relevant authorities to seize the bank accounts and properties of the accused involved in human trafficking cases. Overall, the FIA Gujarat has arrested 10 accused involved in the cases of human smuggling, among them four are on bail, while the courts had declared the remaining six as the proclaimed offenders. Charge-sheets in five cases have been presented in courts." The newspaper further explained.

Politics

New oil crisis looming as rival PM threatens to shut down oil sites in the east

Osama Hammad, who is heading the rival government in the east, warned on Saturday to take action and halt oil and gas operations in the main oil sites east of the country.

Hammad accused the National Oil Corporation (NOC) of siding with the UN-recognized Government of National Unity based in Tripoli and giving it access to "seize" \$16 billion in oil revenues.

He warned to halt export operations and declare force majeure in response.

Hammad's government said it would "resort to the judiciary to appoint a judicial guard" over the seized funds to stop the ongoing tampering. "The situation will remain unchanged until completing the relevant legal and financial procedures, which the committee formed by the House of Representatives should reorganize and implement under the supervision of the NOC's chief," a statement by the east-based government said.

Hammad said his administration would withhold development expenses without prejudice to the salary item or the service sector.

His government called on the UN Support Mission in Libya to undertake its tasks without bias and "clarify all that has been wasted from the people's money."

It may be worth noting that the Benghazi Court of Appeal had earlier rejected the NOC's appeal against the parallel government's decision to seize oil revenues and upheld its procedures for confiscating the NOC's accounts, issued on January 25, 2023.



Politics

Presidential candidates reject 6+6 committee's election laws

38 candidates for Libyan presidential elections rejected "Article 88" of the presidential election laws reached by the 6+6 joint committee of the House of Representatives and High Council of State, saying that the Article "cancels Law No.1 of 2021 regarding the election of the head of state and defining his authorities.

The candidates described legally terminating the previous law as "injustice" on the part of the legislative authority, which they said "deprived candidates of the right to run for elections, which has become immune by the judiciary".

The candidates called for removing "Article 88" of the 6+6 committee if it became binding and achieved consensus, stressing their adherence to their rights stipulated in Law No.1 of the presidential elections in 2021.

"Article 88" of the presidential elections law in the document resulting from the Bouznika meetings canceled Law No.1 of 2021 regarding the elections of the head of state, including canceling the previous list of candidates and opening the door for new candidacy.





New Russian ambassador to Libya confirms full diplomatic return

The new Russian ambassador to Libya, Aydar Aganin, has hailed the efforts of the Libyan Presidential Council to achieve peace and stability in all parts of Libya, conveying during his meeting with the Head Mohammed Menfi after presenting his credentials on Monday the greetings of Russian President Vladimir Putin, and saying that the Russian diplomatic presence in Libya had fully returned.

Meanwhile, the Presidential Council said Menfi had stressed the depth of the bilateral relations between the two countries, and his keenness on the contribution of Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, in stabilizing the situation in Libya and achieving the dream of Libyans in holding simultaneous parliamentary and presidential elections, saying he was looking forward to the success of the new ambassador in his duties during his tenure in Libya.

Aganin told Sputnik that the Russian embassy in the capital, Tripoli, will work to strengthen friendly relations with Libya. He added that the Russian embassy was organizing its work and intended to establish broader contacts with Libyan representatives, noting that "Libyans are also interested in dialogue with [Moscow] and listening to its assessments and point of view."

Menfi accepted Monday in Tripoli the credentials of five new ambassadors. In addition to Russia, Italy, Ghana, Bangladesh, and Vatican City's ambassadors presented their credentials.



Calls on Libyan judiciary to rule on appeals against HoR's 13th constitutional amendment

67 of parties, civil organizations, and legal personalities called on the judiciary: specifically the Constitutional Circuit Court to quickly decide on the appeal against the 13th constitutional amendment issued by the House of Representatives (HoR).

The signatories reaffirmed their rejection of the 13th amendment and the outcomes of its 6+6 joint committee, saying their work was unconstitutional, and warning against trying to pass this amendment "in order not to be plunged into destabilization in the country and to save the civilian state."

The statement also rejected all attempts to allow dual nationals and those whom it called the "putschists and military men wanted by the judiciary" to run for elections or to be integrated into political life, calling on the Attorney General and the Military Prosecutor to perform their duties and implement non-impunity measures against those who have committed crimes against the Libyan people.

"We reject the UN mission's approach to reducing the political solution to the House of Representatives and the High Council of State, stressing the need to respect the Libyan ownership and commitment to holding local or international dialogues on the constitutional path, with participation being in accordance with specific and announced national standards." It added.

The member of the High Council of State (HCS), Ibrahim Bushala, said that the 55 members of the HCS who rejected the 13th constitutional amendment "are sticking to their position", adding that the two chambers must respect the constitutional declaration and put electoral laws in accordance with it.



Politics

Tajani: Developments in Russia may negatively affect its influence in North Africa and Ukraine

Italian Foreign Minister, Antonio Tajani, has stated that "Russia has become weaker," as large cracks appeared in its military system, that was pioneered by the "Wagner" private military group.

In an interview with La Stampa newspaper on Monday, Tajani said that this matter would constitute a great loss for Moscow in Ukraine as well as in North Africa. He explained that Wagner's influence was harmful in those areas, which led to destabilization of the region and impacted the migration flows, and there these divisions now.

The head of Italian diplomacy added that his country does not think of supporting the leader of Wagner, but rather Italy defends the independence of Ukraine, and does not interfere in the political life in Russia.



Politics

National Council for Libyan Women calls for expanding the political space for women

Representatives of the National Council for Libyan Women have called on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) for capacity building for women and young female decision makers and further asked UNSMIL to engage decision makers in Libya to expand political space for women.

This came during their meeting with the Officer-in-Charge of the UNSMIL, Raisedon Zenenga, according to the UNSMIL.

The two sides shared their views on issues related to elections and the outcome of the 6+6 including the issue of women's quotas and ensuring that women have decision making roles.

Zenenga stressed that UNSMIL has been advocating for the empowerment of women and the case for raising female representation in the upcoming elections.



Politics

HNEC head, Qatari ambassador review Arab support for Libyan elections

The head of the High National Elections Commission (HNEC), Emad Al-Sayeh, held talks with the Qatari Ambassador to Libya, Khaled Al-Dosari, which focused on the Arab and regional support for the electoral process in Libya.

A statement by the HNEC stressed that the support of the Arab countries would achieve peace and stability in the entire region.

The two sides reviewed proposals to ensure the success of the elections per international standards.

For his part, Al-Dosari affirmed his country's support for the democratic path in Libya, praising the HNEC for its efforts at this end.



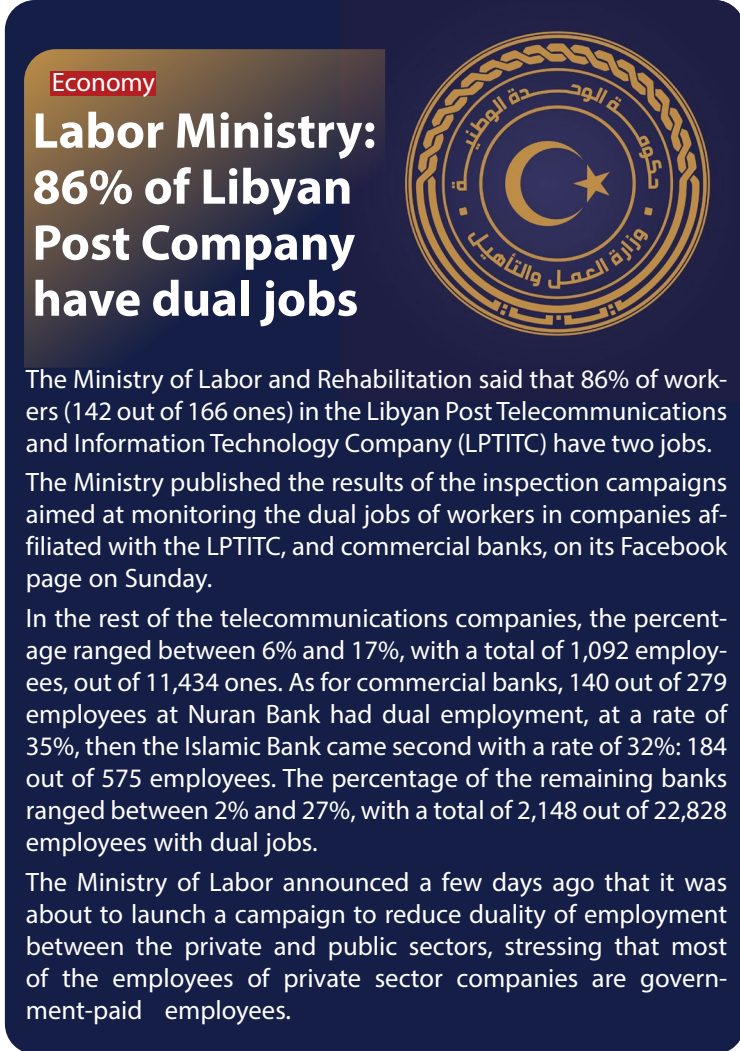
Economy

Karanfil: Turkish exports to Libya during 2023 first quarter amounted to \$758 million

Head of Turkish-Libyan Business Council, Murtaza Karanfil, has said that in the past year 2022, Turkish exports to Libya amounted to 2.4 billion dollars, adding that during the first months of this year, exports amounted to 758 million dollars, despite the earthquake that struck Turkey.

The Turkish businessman, Karanfil pointed out in a statement that the Turkish Industries' Exhibition, which was held recently in the city of Benghazi, was attended by about 38 companies and 65 businessmen, and that its goal is to enhance the volume of Turkish trade in Libya, which amounts to 15 billion dollars.

Karanfil explained that Turkish businessmen will be able to transform their outstanding experience into investments in areas needed by Libya and thus contribute to the country's development.



Economy

Labor Ministry: 86% of Libyan Post Company have dual jobs

The Ministry of Labor and Rehabilitation said that 86% of workers (142 out of 166 ones) in the Libyan Post Telecommunications and Information Technology Company (LPTITC) have two jobs.

The Ministry published the results of the inspection campaigns aimed at monitoring the dual jobs of workers in companies affiliated with the LPTITC, and commercial banks, on its Facebook page on Sunday.

In the rest of the telecommunications companies, the percentage ranged between 6% and 17%, with a total of 1,092 employees, out of 11,434 ones. As for commercial banks, 140 out of 279 employees at Nuran Bank had dual employment, at a rate of 35%, then the Islamic Bank came second with a rate of 32%: 184 out of 575 employees. The percentage of the remaining banks ranged between 2% and 27%, with a total of 2,148 out of 22,828 employees with dual jobs.

The Ministry of Labor announced a few days ago that it was about to launch a campaign to reduce duality of employment between the private and public sectors, stressing that most of the employees of private sector companies are government-paid employees.



Economy

Dbeibah launches initiative for Libyan private sector

Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah launched Monday an initiative that would allow the private sector to present development and creativity ideas to the government and its officials.

This step came when Dbeibah was briefed on a center-pivot irrigation project proposal for growing wheat and barley using solar energy. The proposal was made by a private Libyan company, according to the government's statement on Facebook.

The center-pivot irrigation project "aims to bring about development, especially in the Libyan south, by supporting small and medium enterprises in the agricultural field, especially grain cultivation in the south, as it is an essential element in the food industry."

The statement said the government's media platform "Hakomitna" would be the means of receiving proposals from private sector companies to the government through a committee that will be established later.



Economy

With nine active ports, Libya exports more than 26 million barrels of oil a month

Libyan oil ports could export up to 26.1 million barrels of crude per month, said the National Oil Corporation on Saturday.

According to the NOC's data, Sidra recorded an export capacity of eight million barrels a month, Brega 1.8 million, Zueitina between 2.6 and 3.2 million, Ras Lanuf 3.5 million, Zawiya 3.5 million, Al-Hariqa six million, Mellitah three million, and the offshore port of Gaza about 600 thousand barrels.

Libya's daily production of crude oil amounts to about 1.2 million barrels, according to the latest statistics of the National Oil Corporation.

Last May, the NOC revealed plans to boost oil production by about 8% by next December, with a view to raising its output to the highest in over a decade.

The NOC's Chief, Farhat Bengdara, told Bloomberg that they should be able to pump 1.3 million barrels a day by the end of the year.



Economy

Economy minister monitors progress in tackling duplication between public, private sectors

The Acting Minister of Economy and Trade, Suhail Bouchiha, made an inspection visit to the Commercial Registry Authority to follow up on the progress of a government program to couple the systems of the Commercial Register Authority and the National No.

The government has launched the program to prevent duplication of employment between the public and private sectors.

Bouchiha was briefed on the mechanism of work and efforts to activate electronic payment as part of the ministry's digital transformation plan.

He called for the authority to accelerate work and finalize the system in July. Last week, the Prime Minister agreed to form a committee to identify public-sector employees managing other jobs in the private sector as part of a campaign to regulate the labour market in Libya.

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Opinions

Bathily gives a mercy shot to 6 + 6 talks

By *Youssef Lutfi*, political writer

The UN envoy to Libya, Abdoulaye Bathily, made on Monday 19th June, a briefing on developments of the political situation in Libya, during an open session of the UN Security Council. The most important part of his briefing was that the political process in Libya reached 'once again a critical phase' and that the discussions of the 6 + 6 committee were not sufficient to resolve the main contentious issues to enable elections to take place. He further stated that consensus on electoral laws cannot be achieved through a legal framework only, but rather requires a new political agreement. Speaking on security developments, Bathily said, "Tripoli has remained relatively stable during the past period, but the ongoing government operations to combat smuggling and human trafficking activities in Zawiyah and the surrounding areas may pose a threat to the relative stability in Tripoli, due to allegations that the strikes are being used politically."

Bouznika is stripped

As the Arab saying goes 'The mountain labors and brings forth a mouse', after months-long discussions, the Bouznika meetings between representatives of House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) produced a legal basis which is said to be flawed, to say the least. Starting with the appeals mechanism that will lead the electoral process to a definite collapse, to the requirement to synchronize the parliamentary and presidential elections (the second round) and hedging the legitimacy of the results of the parliamentary elections on the presidential elections! and ending with the defective formulations and the violation of the confidentiality of voter data, as well as the legal rule agreed upon between HoR and the HCS, all represent a definite recipe for failure.

The UN envoy's criticism of these problems was clear in his briefing, and his talk about the failure of the 6 + 6 committee, and the need to reach a new political agreement, clearly indicated Bathily's dissatisfaction with the two wings of the legislative authority, especially in the light of his previous statements about the possibility of bypassing these bodies and forming a committee that includes other parties to undertake the task of preparing an electoral base - a task which the National Dialogue Forum Committee previously failed.

Bathily's briefing, in light of his previous statements, provoked disapproval and indignation of members of HoR and HCS, as the media witnessed an influx of statements of condemnation and denunciation during the past few days, the most prominent of which was the statement of Aqila Saleh at a joint press-conference with the Speaker of the Egyptian Parliament, Hanafi Jabali, that Bathily "is not a ruler" of Libya to instruct him to form committees, and that the mandate of the UN mission is to "support, and not formation of committees."

Statements of HoR and HCS reveal the strained relationship with the Senegalese diplomat, whose briefing came to put an end to the allegations of full agreement announced by the HoR and the HCS, and to reveal the futility of the Bouznika talks, and to act as a mercy shot for the upcoming election project.

The government, a legitimate project

Bathily's criticism of the outputs of Bouznika and the 6 + 6 committee did not spare the Government of National Unity its share of criticism, as Bathily alluded to it in his briefing directly and indirectly. On the one hand, the envoy levelled a direct criticism of the military campaign led by the government west of Tripoli against the smuggling and human trafficking gangs, holding such campaign responsible for undermining stability, and the relative enjoyment of stability in Tripoli and the western region under the rule of the smuggling cartels. The envoy also indicated the possibility of bypassing the government in the context of his review of the major problems and the need to overcome them through a new political agreement, on top of which comes the formation of a mini-government that will undertake the preparation of the elections project.

Bathily made it clear in his briefing, that the Libyan political parties are either complicit in thwarting the election project or failing in making it a success, but as usual, the UN envoy did not fulfill the promises he made upon his arrival and did not provide any logical and objective remedies or approaches targeting the real root causes of the crisis.

Circle of futility and failure

The Libyan scene has revolved around a circle of failed political understandings for almost 8 years. Since the launch of the Skhirat Accord and its complications, through the understandings of Paris, the first and second Berlin conferences, and then finally the Geneva agreement, the international parties overseeing the "political process" have not succeeded in ending the state of the political impasse, but the crisis is getting worse and more complicated with every new agreement.

Bathily's failure to address the political impasse is not a personal failure of the UN envoy as much as it is an extension of the international and UN tampering that has continued since 2015, as the international political approach to the Libyan crisis goes beyond the real causes of the crisis to jump on technical problems or political complications resulting from prior understandings - the Sukhirat Accord as an example - Bathily, who confined the causes of the current impasse to the issues of consensus around the election law, ignoring a small detail, which is subjecting the HoR - in terms of legitimacy it is dissolved legal wise - to the influence of a general who turned against the constitution and dominated the country's oil resources with the support of mercenaries and foreign powers. Ignoring the actual causes of the crisis was and still is the policy of the UN mission, starting with Bernardino Leon all the way to Abdoulaye Bathily, and in light of the corruption of the Libyan parties and their benefit from the continued state of impasse and political conflict, it is not expected that the country will emerge from the cycle of absurdity and failure without the existence of a conscious popular movement that regains the scene from the hegemony of corruption and futility.

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

CULTURE

Libya Cuisine: The Qarqush or Qiddeed

Meat drying is a widespread technique used all over the world under different names with various methods. In Libya, it is Qarqush or Qiddeed. Since Libya is an African country that enjoys a whole lot of sunshine, dried meat is prepared by exposing the meat to sunshine for several days, flipping it once and a while and keeping watch on dirt and unpleasant flies!

This makes the Qarqush a very sensitive food, which many stick to preparing it at home rather than buying it ready-made from the grocery. Summer is the perfect time for making the Qarqush, but it is also associated with Eid Al-Adha, and since the Eid is fixed on the lunar calendar, it cycles through all the seasons, which means that Eid may come in winter. If so, we rely on the air circulation and just have to do with a little bit of winter sunshine.

In the old-days, Qiddeed was a basic food and more common than fresh meat for many reasons, one is for the lack of freezers, and maybe the unsettled life-style of the desert inhabitants, but one of which the nowadays still have in common is that you could prepare a quick meal with dried meat, and this comes in handy with an unexpected guest that might drop in at breakfast, lunch or at dinner time; for it is from the genuine Arab tradition to serve food for any person who enters your house at mealtime.

The basic ingredient for dried meat is of course salt, other herbs vary from one country or region to another. In Libya, we dry other parts of livestock too, including the lungs, heart, stomach and the intestines. It's called dried "Usban", this might sound awkward, but the old generation might have come up with this idea due to the poor life they experienced that made meat an expensive fancy meal at that time, so once you gain livestock, you won't dare waste any part of it. They even cooked the head, legs, and melted the fat to cook with.

However, this food was passed on and is still desired. We grew up eating it and we don't find it gross, the herbs included such as garlic, dried mint hot spice and others give it the unique smell that identifies the dried Usban when cooked, from up the street.

Qarqush goes nicely with couscous, pasta, the traditional meal Basin, but most familiar with the homemade pasta "Rishtat Al-Burma" and the "Shakshuka", a light quick meal that consists of green pepper, tomatoes, and eggs. The recipe is shared with other Mediterranean countries but with an additional Libyan touch the "Qarqush".





Sports

Al-Ahly Tripoli tops Libyan league's title-winning round

Al-Ahly Tripoli won 3-1 against Al-Nasser at Monastir Stadium in Tunisia as part of the first round of the title-winning six-team stage of the Libyan football league.

Now Al-Ahly Tripoli has 3 points just like Al-Ahly Benghazi which won 2-1 against title holder Al-Ittihad at Sousse Stadium in Tunisia. Al-Ahly Tripoli topped the round on goal difference.

The third game of the title-winning round saw Al-Hilal and Abu Salim teams draw 0-0 at the Olympic Stadium in Tunisia. Both teams came third and fourth, followed by Al-Nasser and Al-Ittihad with zero points.



Sports

Libya nabs two bronze medals in Niger judo championship

Libya's Judo team has clinched two bronze medals in the Niger Open Judo Championship that is taking place in the capital, Niamey. The competition, which kicked off on Saturday, attracted 104 athletes from 26 countries.

Libya's Mostafa Benaissa bagged a bronze medal after defeating his three opponents from Niger before losing to the gold medal winner, Zulu from Zambia, in the semi-finals.

Rami Al-Hattab, earned Libya's second bronze in men's 66 kg, defeating Moroccan Rabih Khudair and two other athletes from Niger, but then lost to Nigerian Agbo, who won gold.

Libya's national judo team participated with four athletes in preparation for the Arab Games, which will be held in Algeria in early July.

Crimes



Ministry of Interior arrests seven people for antiquities trade

Ministry of Interior has apprehend seven people who wanted to sell antiquities.

It stated that members of the Information Office, in cooperation with the Informatics and Communications Control Department at the Attorney General's Office, were able to arrest a suspected person in possession of antiquities.

The suspect admitted to have obtained the antiquities from six other people who were also arrested, it added.

The ministry revealed that all legal measures were taken against them, and they were referred with the seized items to the Attorney General's office for measures at his discretion.

Crimes



Public Prosecutor arrests 3 suspects involved in fuel smuggling operations

The Public Prosecution has ordered the detention of three foreign suspects, who were part of a gang for smuggling fuel out of the country.

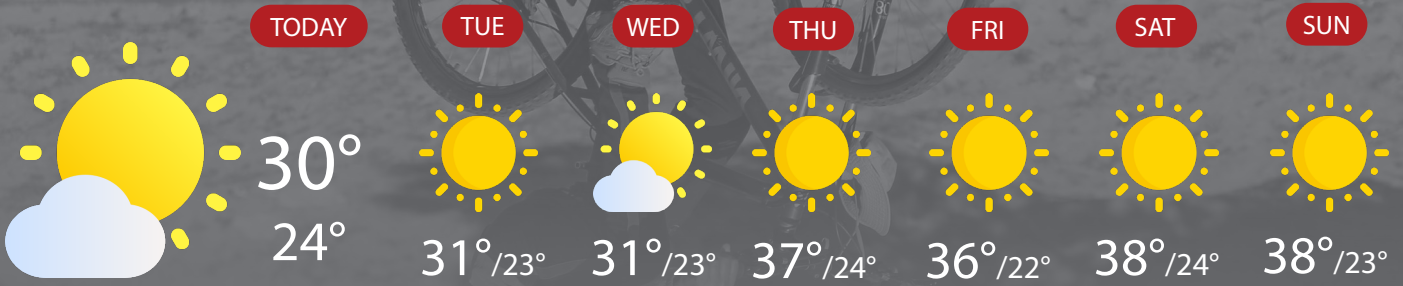
According to the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Anti-Corruption Prosecution Office of Misrata Appeal Court investigated the attempted smuggling of twenty marine transport containers containing 360,000 liters of diesel fuel out of the country.

The gang added small quantities of oil to the fuel, in anticipation of conducting an inspection of the loaded materials, as they were already able to smuggle large quantities of fuel at different times and through different ports, the Office added.



Photo of the Week

Tripoli Weather Forecast



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