

UNSMIL reviews Libyan election laws, underlines four controversial issues



The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) said Thursday that it had completed an initial technical review of the “Presidential Election Law no. 28/2023 and Parliamentary Election Law no. 27/2023”, which were officially received from the Speaker of the House of Representatives on 5 October.

UNSMIL commended the efforts of the 6+6 Joint Committee in drafting the laws, which it said they represented a compromise amongst the members of the Committee, and expressed its appreciation for the progress achieved, despite the challenges and pressures faced by members of the 6+6.

Based on its initial review and consultations with relevant Libyan stakeholders, especially the High National Electoral Commission (HNEC), UNSMIL said it had believed that the updated laws constituted a working basis for the holding of elections and would require the commitment of all parties in good faith, especially the major leaders.

UNSMIL pointed out some contentious issues that needed to be addressed and resolved through a political settlement, describing the issues as a further manifestation of the lack of trust among Libyan political, military and security actors.

It asked for the provision for a mandatory second round for the

presidential elections, regardless of the vote obtained by candidates, linking the presidential and parliamentary elections, making the National Assembly elections contingent on the success of the presidential elections, issuing a unified government to lead the country to elections and close the chapter of interim governments, and the full inclusion of Libyans, including women and all cultural components.

UNSMIL emphasized that those issues were political in nature and required a national compromise to take the country to elections, calling on major stakeholders to come forward in good faith and engage in a constructive dialogue to address these long-standing issues once and for all.

“Political leaders, military and security actors, civil society organizations and traditional leaders must demonstrate responsible and accountable leadership that enables all Libyans to exercise their political rights, bringing an end to transitional arrangements through peaceful and inclusive national elections.” UNSMIL said.

It added that the Libyan people “deserve peace, stability and progress. Elections represent the only way for that brighter future for the country. Libyans deserve it and the international community must support the realization of this long-awaited aspiration.”



Politics

UNSMIL concerned about clashes, continued cut-off of telecom networks in Benghazi

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) said it was concerned about the armed clashes in Benghazi, which resulted in unverified reports of civilian casualties and the continued disruption of communications.

In posts on X platform, UNSMIL reminded all parties in Libya of their obligations to protect civilians, calling on “Eastern authorities to urgently restore telecommunications in Benghazi, as they have been cut since the fighting began on 7 Oct.”

“It is a human right to seek and share information, and access to communication is a vital lifeline for civilians trapped by conflict.” UNSMIL added.

Benghazi saw armed clashes last Friday following the return of the Minister of Defense of the former Government of National Accord, Al-Mahdi Al-Barghathi, to the city.

The city saw also a cut-off of telecommunications and there were conflicting reports about the fate of Al-Barghathi, as sources spoke of his arrest by members of Tariq bin Ziyad Brigade and the 115th Battalion, after his house was besieged by their forces, while authorities did not issue any statement in this regard.

Politics



Mild earthquake shakes Libya's Tripoli

A light earthquake was felt in parts of the Libyan capital of Tripoli on Thursday, according to eyewitnesses.

The tremor occurred at 3:31 pm local time with no reports of serious damage or casualties.

The 4.2 magnitude earthquake struck at a depth of 10 km, according to the Libyan Center for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences, which added that the epicenter of the tremor is not known because its seismic monitoring station was down.

A video circulated online showed furniture shaking in an office in Tripoli while other residents shared photos showing cracks in the walls of their buildings.

The Emergency Medicine and Support Center raised the alarm and confirmed in a statement its full readiness in anticipation of any emergency.

Politics

Hammad accuses Dbeibah of supporting Barghathi to destabilize Benghazi



The Prime Minister of the government designated by the House of Representatives (HoR) Osama Hammad accused the Government of National Unity of being behind the armed unrest taking place in Benghazi, describing the force of Al-Mahdi Al-Barghathi as a rogue gang that came with direct funding from elements affiliated with the government in Tripoli.

Hammad said in a statement on Monday evening that the government in Tripoli was not satisfied with national unity after the Derna disaster and was trying to target the social fabric by all means. He criticized the UN mission's statement in which it expressed its concern for the lives of civilians in Benghazi, amid the continuing telecommunications cut-off, saying that a limited security operation against a sabotage group for two hours on Friday evening against the Al-Salmani cell was turned by the UN mission into continuous clashes.

The UN mission to Libya expressed its concern about the conditions of civilians in Benghazi, and the continued telecommunications cut-off since Friday, noting that it was investigating the validity of the reports received regarding civilian casualties.

Benghazi witnessed a telecommunications cut-off blackout coinciding with armed clashes in the Al-Salmani area, where he lives, and where the home of the former Defense Minister of the Government of National Accord, Mahdi Al-Barghathi, is located.

In his first reaction to the clashes, the Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah said that they had reports indicating the occurrence of armed clashes in Benghazi and the deliberate cutting off of telecommunications completely, which left the city completely isolated from the world.

Dbeibah called on the Attorney General to open an investigation into the unrest, calling on the security authorities in Benghazi to do their duty to protect the people of Benghazi.

Politics

Libya's Mufti hails Palestinian battles against Israel



Libya's Grand Mufti, Sheikh Al-Sadiq Al-Gharyani, delivered a video statement on Monday to endorse the battles launched against Israel on Saturday.

In his statement, the Mufti delivered two messages; one to the Palestinian resistance fighters and another to the Islamic youth in General.

He underscored the necessity for the "Mujahedeen" to be sincere and truthful in order to achieve victory. "Do not become weak and do not be sad, O Mujahideen, for you are hoping from God what they do not hope for." Shiekh Al-Gharyani also called on the youth of the Islamic nation in Palestine and its neighbouring countries to support the resistance fighters in the ongoing battle. "Your brothers, mothers, women, and children are calling for your help in the Gaza Strip... When will you support your brothers if you do not support them now?" He called for all fronts to be opened, both inside and outside the country, warning that neglecting the Mujahedeen would result in grave consequences and punishment from God.

It may be worth noting that the Sharia Research Council of the Libyan Fatwa House issued a statement to support the Aqsa Flood operation against the Israeli occupying forces and congratulated Muslims on "this great victory."

Politics

Tanasuh channel under attack

The Tanasuh channel reported an attack on its HQ in Tajoura on Saturday.

Unidentified attackers targeted the channel's premises with RPG shells at dawn.

The channel shared images on its Facebook account showing a wrecked ceiling and destruction in its outer walls. Luckily, no human casualties were reported.

Meanwhile, the institution's management vowed to take all legal measures to prosecute the criminals and preserve their rights.

The channel will remain "true to its slogan and message" of establishing truth and advocating for combating crime and injustice, the Tanasuh stated.

For its part, the Department of Media and Government Communications denounced the attack and expressed solidarity with the staff, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding media institutions from violence.

Founded in 2014, the Tanasuh channel geared its programs towards extending knowledge in various fields, particularly Islamic science.

The channel hosts qualified legal scholars and produces talk shows, besides other educational programs.

Over time, the Tanasuh developed its broadcasting by covering more areas and extending its presence on social media platforms.



Economy



Al-Kabir reviews with IsDB Chairman supporting small and medium enterprises

The Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, has discussed with the Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Mohammed Al-Jasser, the CBL's plan to support small and medium enterprises and to benefit from the IsDB in particular.

The meeting on Tuesday discussed the IsDB team's recent visit to the capital, Tripoli, the capacity building programs adopted by the bank, and the vision of empowering youth and increasing their participation in the labour market. Both sides reviewed supporting financial sector, financial control development programs, and the bank's experience in maintaining financial sustainability.

Economy



Al-Kabir discusses with British company environmentally friendly currency printing file

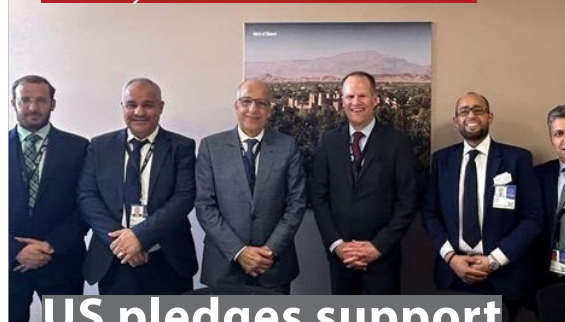
The Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, has discussed with the CEO of the British company De La Rue the file of environmentally-friendly currency printing and the global shift from traditional currency to digital one.

De La Rue Plc (De La Rue) is a commercial banknote printer, banknote paper and polymer substrates, and passport manufacturer.

The meeting, which was attended by officials from both sides, discussed the efforts to unify the CBL and its strategy to achieve digital transformation, according to the CBL Facebook page on Tuesday.

The meeting took place in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh, which hosts the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which are their first on the African continent in 50 years.

Economy



US pledges support for CBL unification efforts and High Finance Committee

The United States (US) renewed its support for the process of unifying the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), as well as the role of the High Finance Committee established pursuant to the Presidential Council's decision to determine aspects of government spending in Libya, the CBL said.

The CBL Governor, Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, and his accompanying delegation met on Tuesday with Deputy Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury, Eric Meyer, on the sidelines of the meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which are ongoing in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh.

During the meeting, Al-Kabir and Mayer discussed the recommendations of the US Treasury Department regarding the governance of spending on the reconstruction of areas affected by Storm Daniel in cooperation with the World Bank, after the Government of National Unity had submitted a request for assistance from the World Bank earlier last month.

Al-Kabir provided a briefing on the measures completed within the plan to unify the CBL, while Mayer stressed the US support for the unification track, and the US Treasury's support for the role of the High Finance Committee to ensure transparency and disclosure and ensure the fair distribution of development allocations.

He also discussed with the American official efforts to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, in addition to discussing the program to review countries' contributions to the International Monetary Fund, as well as the controls of financial transactions for international non-profit organizations.

Al-Kabir and his accompanying delegation are holding a number of meetings with senior economic and financial officials participating in the fall meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Marrakesh.



Economy

Dbeibah urges accelerating the implementation of Third Ring Road project

The head of the Government of National Unity, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, has stressed the need for the coalition of Egyptian companies implementing the Third Ring Road project in Tripoli to adhere to the timetable for finishing the project.

During his visit to the project's site, Dbeibah stressed the necessity of following up with the American consulting office and accelerating the implementation of the project, which was delayed for years, before it is resumed as part of the Return to life initiative, according to a government statement.

The statement confirmed the completion of all technical and financial procedures, the arrival of technical crews, and the preparation of workshops and sites for project workers, as the project manager, Kamal Bitar, gave a detailed explanation of the completed work that is essential for launching the project.



Economy

NOC Chairman asks AGOCO to increase oil production

The Chairman of the National Oil Corporation (NOC), Farhat Bengdara, called on the management of the Arabian Gulf Oil Company (AGOCO) to increase oil production rates in its fields, stressing the NOC's support for achieving this goal. This request came in a meeting held by Bengdara on Sunday with the Chairman of AGOCO's Management Committee, Mohammed Bin Shatwan, and members of the Management Committee at the company's headquarters in Benghazi. AGOCO said on Facebook that Bengdara had stressed during the meeting the necessity of creating the appropriate environment for the company's employees in order to ensure greater performance and productivity.

It added that Bengdara also discussed the difficulties and obstacles facing AGOCO and preventing its employees from achieving some of the goals that the management set, referring to the suspension of a number of projects on financial and logistical grounds.

The average production of the Arabian Gulf Oil Company reaches 280,000 barrels per day, according to company's data.

Economy

Libya signs agricultural entrepreneurship agreement with Italian CIHEAM Bari Institute



The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Local Government for Municipal Affairs, Mustafa Al-Turki, has signed a cooperation agreement with the CIHEAM Bari Institute in the field of agricultural entrepreneurship.

This came on the sidelines of Al-Turki's visit to the Agrilevante 2023 Fair in Italy.

The agreement comes within the framework of efforts to increase local food production and improve the quality of life for citizens in the targeted municipalities, and to contribute to strengthening the local economy in those municipalities.

This agreement included providing training to farmers on the

latest agricultural technologies, in addition to providing agricultural machinery to farmers to improve agricultural infrastructure and use modern technologies in agriculture.

The agriculture in the municipalities of the south is an important source of income and economic sustainability for many families, but it faces many challenges that affect its efficiency and productivity, in order to overcome these challenges, the government is implementing a set of initiatives and programs aimed at developing the agricultural sector and enhancing the capabilities of farmers.



Opinions

Why do we call for an international investigation?

By Abdullah Alkabar, a Libyan political writer and commentator

Defining responsibility for Derna disaster, in a clear manner with no room for any further interpretation, is the most important expected result of the investigations supervised by the Public Prosecution.

It is certain that these investigations will take some time to complete all evidence, before charging anyone proven to be negligent, or failed to implement an effective response that fulfills all the procedures required for such kind of a situation during the preparation phase, to ensure that no casualties occur or if any, they are to their minimum levels.

Without ignoring the magnitude of corruption over the past decades, it is certain that government division, financial and administrative corruption, weak oversight and follow-up, and absence of implementation tools for the authority are prominent factors in the disastrous aftermath of Hurricane Daniel.

For a whole decade, the authorities, east and west, were consumed by their conflicts, maximizing their influence and authority, with no initiative whatsoever, to initiate reform and construction. This aggravated the state of comprehensive collapse in all sectors and fields, including the destroyed infrastructure in all Libyan cities.

However, these factors alone are not enough to explain such a huge toll of victims. The volume and height of water in Derna Valley had reached dangerous levels, and with the continued heavy rain, flooding will be inevitable, and the dam may not withstand the force of water, and its collapse is an inevitable reality, even if it was at its best, as rubble dams collapse and are washed away if water level exceeded the height of the dam.

Therefore, investigating the negligence of dam maintenance, and revealing any embezzlement of funds allocated for their maintenance, is a final investigation that will be carried out by the prosecution, even if the disaster did not occur, as it has the jurisdiction to follow up on public money expenditure.

Therefore, the responsibility falls on the political authority, which did not implement the procedures and strategies followed when preparing for a violent natural phenomenon, which was predicted, and its time was known, as it struck several countries before descending on the cities and villages of the Green Mountain, in eastern Libya.

Given that all authorities are aware of the existence of cracks in the dams, as it is further highlighted by the scientific study, published in a peer-reviewed university journal, that sounded the alarm of the dams that needed maintenance, and that the best measure to avoid the danger was to evacuate the areas exposed to floods, in order to preserve lives and some of the property that can be removed.

However, the authorities (intentionally or ignorantly) did the opposite of what was dictated by the usual precautionary measures, in the face of this type of natural disaster, which is imposing a curfew, and the torrents swept through homes, leaving behind such a huge number of victims.

Many individuals and entities are demanding an international investigation into the disaster, not because of a lack of confidence in the local judiciary, or doubting its capabilities and integrity, but because it is burdened with cases of all types of crimes, which have reached an unprecedented number, for multiple reasons that this is not the place to list. Furthermore, it does not have the tools to bring in any potential defendants, especially those who are armed, and will not heed to any call to investigate their possible responsibility for this high toll of victims. Moreover, some members of the prosecution will be subjected to pressure, threats, or restrictions and therefore, would be prevented from exercising their prosecution duties and tasks in some areas.

Requesting an international investigation into the disaster does not aim to refer the crime file to international justice, but rather to reveal the complete truth and determine who is responsible for the disaster. As for accountability and trial, it is a local matter handled by the judiciary.

International investigators are supposed to be assigned by the United Nations, and therefore no accused individual, no matter how strong he is, will dare to threaten them, and if anyone tries to obstruct them, he will put himself in a position of suspicion. The United Nations and the Security Council have their deterrent tools for those who may try to thwart the investigation.

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

Health

101 health workers killed in the aftermath of Storm Daniel

The World Health Organization has confirmed that 101 health workers in Libya lost their lives during Storm Daniel or in its immediate aftermath, among the 4333 people thus far confirmed dead following the storm, while more than 8500 people are still missing.

This was stated by Hala Khudari, head of the health emergencies team at the World Health Organization office in Libya, during an online media briefing on health emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, which the organization broadcast on its official Facebook page.

Khudari described what Libya experienced as a result of the storm that struck its eastern cities as disastrous, adding, "I was in Derna and I saw the destruction".

She confirmed the continuation of work to recover the bodies of the victims, noting that last Tuesday a body was recovered 250 km from the shores of the city of Derna.

Khudari pointed out that the Libyan health system in the affected areas made great efforts to respond to the wounded and transport the bodies of those who died.



Health

Psychological support clinic for flood victims opened in Tripoli

The Ministry of Health of the Government of National Unity has opened a mental health clinic in the Regatta village in the capital, Tripoli, called "Yasmine Derna" to provide psychological and community support to families affected by the floods caused by Storm Daniel.

The Ministry explained in a statement, that the clinic will provide services for conducting a psychological health survey, medical examination, and treating cases through psychiatry specialists affiliated with Al-Razi Hospital.

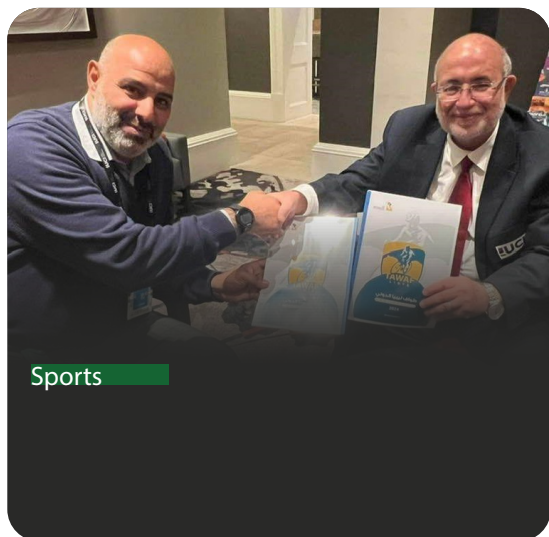


Health

NCDC calls to take precautions measures to confront bedbugs

The National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) has called on the heads of international health control units at border crossings to carry out sterilization operations for luggage and goods coming from France and any country that records a bedbug outbreak.

The NCDC stressed the need for coordination and communication with the agricultural quarantine ports and customs authorities to report any presence of this insect inside means of transport or waiting halls, and to report any suspicious cases to the International Health Oversight Office. The center pointed out the need to enhance awareness and education among citizens at entry points about bedbugs, their symptoms, how to deal with them, and take the necessary measures to address the issue by launching scientific awareness.



Sports

Union Cycliste Internationale agrees to organize Libya World Tour

The Head of the Libyan Cyclists Union, Nouredine Al-Treki, announced on Tuesday the approval of the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) to organize the Libya World Tour, and including the city of Derna as one of its stages.

Al-Treki said in a statement to the Libyan News Agency that they had received official approval from the UCI for the organization of the Libya Tour annually starting next year, and to support the country with modern bicycles for the team, saying they had received 8 bicycles last week.

"We met with Wajih Azzam, President of the African Cyclists Union, as well as with David Labratien, President of UCI, and they promised us to approve the organization of the Libya Tour annually, starting next year, with the participation of many Arab and African teams, as well as European teams. This Tour will be the fourth and will be organized after more than 13 years of suspension." He added.



Sports

Libya takes part in Powerlifting Championships in Mongolia

Libyan athletes will open their participation in the 2023 World Masters Powerlifting Championships on Sunday, October 08.

The 2023 World Masters Powerlifting Championships will be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from October 8-15. A total of 424 veteran athletes from around the world will take part in this event.

Libya is participating with 10 athletes, namely Omar Shabek, Akram Al-Bouaishi, Mohamed Al-Khazali, and Alaa Al-Din Al-Sheikhi, in the over 40-year-old master competition.

While Abdullah Abu Shaala and Ashraf Al-Falah, in addition to Adel Sultan, Abdul-Hakim Al-Delfaq and Khaled Al-Kharif, will participate in the over 50-year-old masters competitions, and the national team is represented in the over 60 Masters competitions by a single athlete, Ibrahim Madi.



Culture

Restoration work on one of the oldest mosques in North Africa completed

The Awjila Heritage Association has announced the completion of restoration work on the ancient mosque in Awjila, which is one of the oldest mosques in North Africa.

The association explained in a post on its Facebook page that the restoration process came with the support of the American Institute for Foreign Study.

The ancient Awjila Mosque, or as the people of the city call it, "The Great Mosque," is considered one of the oldest mosques in Libya and North Africa. It was built after the Islamic conquest of North Africa in the year 666.



Tech

Internet link between Misrata and Tripoli interrupted

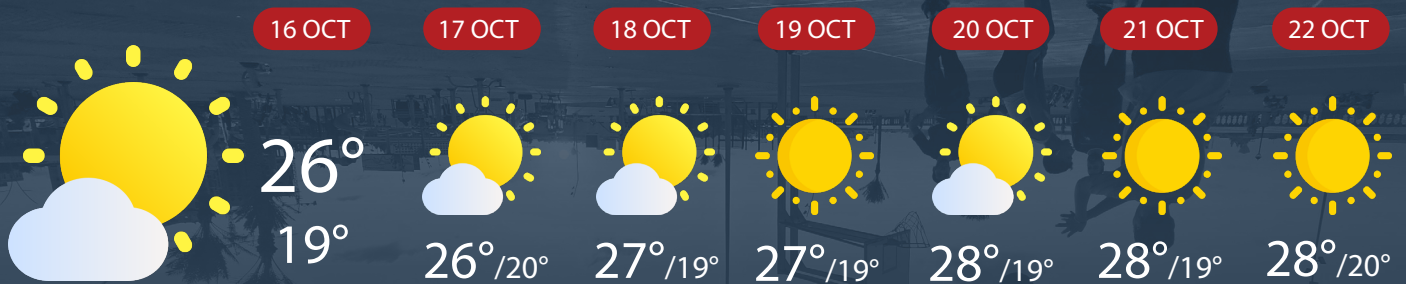
The Telecommunications Holding Company announced, on Saturday, October 7, 2023, that Internet services were affected due to the interruption of a 4.5 km cable, west of the Kaam Gate, which led to the cessation of the internet link between Misrata and Tripoli, with a capacity of 40 gigabytes.

The company explained in a statement that 15 stations were affected in the region, as a result of excavation work carried out by some citizens.

Photo of the Week



Tripoli Weather Forecast



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