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The Chinese ambassador to Libya, Li Zhiguo, said his country wants to reopen its embassy in Tripoli as soon as possible to start working from inside the country so that there can be more cooperation.

The remarks came in a meeting with the deputy head of the Presidential Council, Abdullah Al-Lafi, in which they discussed the Coronavirus situation and China's role in providing Covid-19 vaccines to Libya in coordination with the Government of National Unity.

The Chinese ambassador reiterated his country's readiness to support Libya's economy and help in reconstruction projects, while Al-Lafi reiterated the importance of reopening Beijing's embassy and providing visas to Libyans.

The two sides also discussed issues of joint interest in economic and technical fields, especially in telecommunications and electricity.



Libyan institutions had been unified in less than a month, adding

Dbeibah added that the government, parliament, central bank, ministries, and energy agency have all been unified, saying all mili-

fied national army, which he said is now united by the dialogue and talks carried out by the UN in Geneva, allowing for the cease-

The Libyan Prime Minister reiterated that state institutions and on laying down their weapons and "leaving them at home".

"Benghazi is a very important city and it is now going through a very tough time. I home Italy's consulate will be ready to open in three months." Dbeibah said, answering a question about Benghazi's security, reiterating that security status in Libya is much

Politics

Interior Ministry underscores it has the "experience, ability" to secure elections



Minister of Interior, Khaled Mazen, on Monday, reiterated during a meeting with the UN Envoy and Head of Mission in Libya, Jan Kubis, that the Interior Ministry has the ability and experience to ensure the conduct of safe elections.

The minister stressed that his ministry has set out its priorities, and developed a fully articulated plan, to ensure better performance and address complex issues with the efforts of its members and leadership, according to a statement by the Interior Ministry.

In turn, Kubis expressed his desire for the joint development program to continue and touched upon several issues, the most important of which is training specialized cadres in the mine clearance field.

He also discussed the ceasefire agreement, opening the coastal road, and providing the appropriate environment for holding elections next

The two sides raised the illegal immigration issue, its implications, and the importance of expanding cooperation to address this file.

The human rights file in Libya was another issue on the table and in this regard, the interior minister and the UN envoy stressed the importance of building specialized cadres in this field, besides the Interior Ministry's role in fostering and safeguarding human rights in the country.



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Menfi calls for establishing National Reconciliation Commission as soon as possible



The Head of the Presidential Council (PC), Mohammad Menfi, has emphasized the need to press on towards establishing a National Reconciliation Commission to achieve inclusive national reconciliation. The PC head Media Office said in a statement that Menfi and his two deputies, Abdullah al-Lafi and Musa al-Koni met on Monday to draw the broad lines of the commission's work, its organizational structure, goals, and its mandated attributes.

The PC officials stressed that achieving comprehensive national reconciliation that brings together all Libyans is a top priority for the PC, as it is the cornerstone of building a unified civil state, according to the statement.

PC holds meeting in its capacity as Supreme Commander of Libyan Army



The Presidential Council (PC), in its capacity as the Supreme Commander of the Libya Army, held its initial meeting on Monday in the office of the Supreme Commander in Tripoli.

The meeting was held in the presence of Lieutenant General, Mohamed Al-Haddad and a number of other members of the administrative, legal and financial staff in the Office of the Supreme Commander.

The meeting also reviewed a number of files related to the organization and administration within the military institutions.



The Head of Military Prosecution Office in Benghazi, Colonel Ali Madi, said Saturday that the pro-Haftar executioner, Mahmoud Al-Werfalli, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity, had "a partial mental illness" and he was receiving treatment at a psychiatric hospital before he was assassinated last Thursday.

Madi said some parties killed Al-Werfalli to destabilize Benghazi, saying the serial killer was referred to a psychiatric hospital by the military prosecution in eastern Libya in reference to his executions' cases.

Many activists on social media found it strangely odd that Al-Werfalli

Many activists on social media found it strangely odd that Al-Werfalli was a leader at Al-Saiqa Force, a very tough military unit of Haftar's forces, while he was known to be mentally ill.

Observers also commented on Al-Werfalli's recent promotion to a Lieutenant Colonel by orders of Haftar personally, saying how come he was promoted while mentally unstable.

Meanwhile, Madi said two of the suspects in Al-Werfalli's assassination were detained and had been sent to the military prosecution custody, adding that one of the suspects was a woman (referring to the daughter of the murdered lawyer Hanan Al-Barasi: Haneen Al-Abdali) who was apprehended as she was threatening a citizen with a weapon on 20 St.

Al-Werfalli was murdered in Benghazi by unidentified gunmen who opened a barrage of bullets on his car near Al-Arab medical university. On the second day of his killing, Haneen Al-Abdali was kidnapped and later, the security room in Benghazi said she was arrested not abducted, accusing her of killing Al-Werfalli.



Dbeibah calls on Italian firms to invest in Libya



Prime Minister, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, has expressed his desire to reopen the doors of his country to Italian investors and companies.

"I would like Italian investors to consider Libya their home, not just an investment partner," Dbeibah said in an interview with the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera.

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He indicated that Libya and Italy have a history of cooperation and share a lot in common, "from climate to food."

"We will discuss with Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi cooperation with important Italian firms and means to simplify procedures to allow the companies resume their businesses as early as possible." he added.

The Prime Minister revealed that his government is already into deals with big names, indicating that negotiations are on with the Milan-based Salini Imregilo, an industrial group specialized in the construction and civil engineering business.

Dbeibah said he is looking forward to seeing small Italian companies return to Libya and have the Italian Embassy in Libya working at full capacity to help in this process.



The Head of Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey-Libya Business Council, Murtaza Karanfil, said the crisis of the "Ever Given" vessel that shut down the Suez Canal for the last six days highlights the importance of Libya in terms of logistics.

Karanfil added Tuesday that Libya was very important for the Turkish trade and exports' activities to Africa, adding that the important routes of trade heading to North and Central Africa pass through the Suez Canal and need 45 days to reach final destination. Karanfil added that thanks to the logistics center that Turkey is preparing to launch in Libya, the country will manage to enter African routes via the land and it will be an alternative to the "African internal route", adding that it reaches North and Central Africa.

He indicated that the Turkish logistics center in Libya would decrease the duration of the goods' arrival in Africa from 45 days via Suez Canal to between 10 and 15 days, which would mean a very good save of financial costs of transportation.

Last February, Turkey said it had started working on building a logistics center in Libya to be used as a takeoff point for its exports to African countries.

NOC announces control of spillage on crude oil pipeline



The National Oil Corporation (NOC) announced the control of an oil spillage by a specialized maintenance team near Dahra oil-field.

The NOC said that the teams of Waha Oil Company repaired the leak, which occurred on Saturday, involving a 32-inch line, connecting Qitar station towards Dahra Field at the site known as (140km).

The NOC's statement said "The technical teams were capable of completing the work in fixing the leakage in a swift and professional manner, without any effect on the production process."

Economy

GNU offers financial rewards to people with basic salaries



حكومة الوحدة الوطنية 1°00°E+ 1°00°8+ 1°NY°0°1+ Government of National Unity

People with basic salaries (Beneficiaries of Social Solidarity Fund) will receive a monthly financial reward upon a decision issued by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.

According to the decision, the individuals covered by this resolution who do not have family responsibilities will receive an additional 650 dinars.

Breadwinners of a two-member family will get 700 dinars, while an extended family of 3 or over will receive 800 dinars in addition to their basic pension.

The decision states that this bonus will be disbursed until the government introduces a new rise in the salaries of public administration employees.

Economy

US reviews increasing its investments in Libya



The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah held discussions on Wednesday with American companies at a virtual event, hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Libya.

The US ambassador, Richard Norland expressed his country's aspiration to work with the new government to increase its contribution to improve conditions in Libya, according to the US embassy official Facebook page.

Norland added that the participants in the meeting are aware of the difficulty of working in Libya, but they were encouraged after hearing Dbeibah's commitment about the desire to make Libya a destination for foreign investment.

He also said that the continued political progress in Libya could lead to new US and international investments, adding that commitment to the political process and holding the elections on time is an essential way to improve the investment climate in Libya.



In Libya's new interim government, voted in on 10 March, Khalifa Haftar and the Muslim Brotherhood are poorly represented, while prime minister Abdulhamid al-Dabaiba has managed to strengthen his position.

This marks a turning point in the Libyan political landscape. Torn apart since 2015 between the western camp, dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood, and the eastern camp, under Khalifa Haftar's control, Libya is finally regaining a semblance of unity in the composition of its new government.

On 10 March in Sirte, Prime Minister Abdulhamid al-Dabaiba managed to win the vote of confidence held in the House of Representatives. This trial by fire was passed successfully before the 19 March deadline, of which only two government ministers voted against and 36 were absent.

Obtaining the approval of the elected representatives from the east was not easy, but the Prime Minister's plan worked. "The composition of the government illustrates that it is the product of a broad coalition of interests. In this sense it very much represents a power sharing formula," says Tim Eaton, a researcher for the think-tank Chatham House. "It also directly advocates a form of what is known as muhassasa, or quotas, i.e. Dabaiba's government has sought to distribute positions among interest groups and locales."

Composed of two deputy prime ministers, 35 ministers and six ministers of state, this new government offers a balanced representation of the three Libyan regions: Tripolitania in the west, Cyrenaica in the east and Fezzan in the south. "This is one of the keys to Abdulhamid al-Dabaiba's success in convincing government ministers to validate his list," says Mohamed Eljarh, a Libyan affairs specialist and co-founder of Libya Outlook for Research and Consulting. "But it also seems clear that Abdulhamid al-Dabaiba has managed to rally support from key players, including Aguila Saleh and Khalifa Haftar," he says.

Aguila Saleh overrules Haftar

Even though pro-Haftar deputies approved the government list, Haftar has nonetheless lost big time. The strong man of the east did not succeed in placing his men in strategic government positions. He fought hard behind the scenes to obtain the role of minister of defence, but this job remained – in the end – in Dabaiba's hands. This decision allows the prime minister to avoid alienating one of the Libyan camps, as this position was also requested by the various Islamist factions.

However, according to Jalel Harchaoui, a senior fellow at the

Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, Dabaiba will probably leave the field open to Haftar. "The absence of a Minister of Defence will allow Haftar to maintain his military supremacy in the East, even if it is increasingly challenged by internal actors in Cyrenaica," he says.

Haftar suffered another setback. His candidate for deputy prime minister, Saqr Bujwari, the mayor of Benghazi, lost at the last minute. Initially included in the government list drawn up by Dabaiba, Bujwari was dropped in favour of Hussein Al Qatrani, who is close to Aguila Saleh. Dabaiba granted this favour to the speaker of the House of Representatives in order to facilitate the validation of his government by Parliament.

The Muslim Brotherhood weakened

Pillars of former prime minister Fayez al-Sarraj's government, the Muslim Brotherhood is less represented in this new formation. "From 2011 to 2016, Dabaiba was mainly associated with the Misrata revolutionaries and the Muslim Brotherhood," says Harchaoui.

"But this year, in order to come to power, he ignored his usual friends, focusing instead on seducing their enemies: the eastern factions, the Qaddafists, the Zintanis, the Fezzazna of the south, etc.," he says. According to Harchaoui, "Dabaiba has especially made efforts to reassure, please and seduce the anti-Muslim Brotherhood camp in eastern Libya and in a part of Tripolitania."

The Muslim Brotherhood also emerged divided after the prime minister's last election. A large part of them had voted for minister of the interior Fathi Bachagha, rather than for al-Dabaiba. However, the latter still has the support of the Islamist preacher Ali al-Sallabi, close to the Dabaiba family.

The prime minister has thus undoubtedly been strengthened by this first test. Perceived as ingenious and calculating by connoisseurs of Libyan political circles, Dabaiba has formed a weak government composed of ineffective government ministers. As a result, he will have the upper hand when it comes to introducing his policies. His main objective, according to Harchaoui, will be "to focus on reconstruction efforts in general, as this is his primary job. And Abdulhamid al-Dabaiba believes that it is the Lybian population's top priority."

However, there is a shadow over the prime minister's head. He has been accused of bribing several members of the Forum de Dialogue Politique Libyen (LPDF), in order to secure their votes on 5 February. The UN Panel of Experts is due to publish a report on this subject within the next few days, which may call into question al-Dababai's legitimacy.

Honeymoon with Ankara, Moscow and Cairo

Beyond Libya's borders, Dabaiba's political strategy has seduced foreign countries intervening in Libya. "Egypt, Turkey and Russia are satisfied with Dabaiba," says Eljarh. He cultivated his relationship with Russia, which he had already visited several times. But he was especially quick to spare Egypt, which had supported Haftar. The prime minister made his first trip abroad to Cairo on 18 February, for a very symbolic visit.

This reconciliation does not prevent Dabaiba from guaranteeing

Since 2014

Turkey's interests. An influential businessperson from Misrata, Dabaiba is very close to Ankara, an ally of the former Government of National Accord (GNA). According to Harchaoui, the Prime Minister will moreover "ensure three things that Turkey considers sacrosanct: accepting the permanent nature of its military presence; signing many contracts; preserving the November 2019 maritime memorandum.

The government has just nine months before the presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December. Dabaiba's priority will be to manage the withdrawal of foreign troops.

In Tripoli, the euphoria felt upon the formation of this reunified government is already being counterbalanced by the fear of a resurgence of militias. The latter had welcomed Dabaiba's seizure of power against Bachagha, who had instigated a policy to dismantle the katibas.

Eaton sees a risk in the composition of this government, "the power sharing simply serves to underpin greater expenditure by the state to placate warring parties and sustain a status quo. This makes the negotiation of the budget, and the conditions attached to any new budget over access to resources to actors like Haftar, critical." For now, the reunification of the Libyan government provides a window of opportunity to unify the country. The next major undertaking will be to unite the two rival central banks.

Credit: This article was first published by The Africa Report on 18 March 2021

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

One month for officials at Sabha Medical Center to address poor services or step down

Health Minister Ali Al-Zinati gave a one-month deadline for the management of Sabha Medical Center to make reforms or step down. The minister's decision came after he visited several bodies affiliated with the health sector in Sabha city on Saturday.

The Health Ministry's delegation conducted an inspection tour to Sabha Medical Center to experience the workings of its departments first-hand.

According to a statement by the Health Ministry, several new devices and equipment were sitting idle, due to the shortage of medical and medical ancillary personnel.

The health minister ordered immediate action to get the cardiac catheterization department back in service and provide the required cadres to cover the shortage.

During his tour to the centre, the health minister inspected one of the center's towers, where the maintenance operations had been suspended since 2006.

Al-Zinati gave immediate instructions to avoid the existing contract and resume maintenance operations through the ministry's projects department.



The Scientific Advisory Committee for tackling the Coronavirus Pandemic has upgraded the Covid emergency alert level from (3) to (4), which means that transmission is high or rising exponentially.

During its weekly consultative meeting with the Epidemiology Committee, the Scientific Advisory Committee warned that the epidemiological situation had escalated to 51 points while the daily Covid death toll is on the rise.

Further restrictions were recommended in response to the worsening of the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically in areas with high infection rates including, the capital Tripoli, the Western Mountain Region, the coastal cities from Zawiya to Zuwara Misrata, Tobruk,

, and the south.

The committee listed urgent restrictions, including prohibiting all public gatherings such as weddings and funerals, in addition to applying COVID-19 mitigation measures in public facilities, such as social distancing, avoiding large crowds, and mask-wearing. The health officials also called for setting monetary fines on those

Health

who violate the Covid-19 rules.

Libya receives 300,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine next May, German Foreign Ministry says



The German Foreign Ministry stated on Thursday that Libya will receive 300,000 doses of the Coronavirus vaccine by the end of next May. The Ministry also added in a statement that this process will take place within the framework of the Covax initiative led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The statement indicated that the federal government in Berlin has funded the Libyan health system with an additional amount of 9.5 million euros in 2020.

It is noteworthy that German Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas arrived in the capital, Tripoli on Thursday, with his French counterparts, Jean-Yves Le Drian and Italian Luigi Di Maio, as part of the emphasis on European support for the new executive authority in Libya.



The Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), Sadiq Al-Kabir held discussions on Wednesday with the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Libya, Elizabeth Hof and her accompanying delegation.

The two sides discussed overcoming the difficulties facing the work of WHO, and its efforts in the urgent response to confront the Coronavirus pandemic and the vaccinations of children in Libya.



The current Chairman of the Libyan Football Federation (LFF), Abdelhakim Al-Shalmani, was re-elected for four more years by 62 votes in the LFF elections at Dar Al-Salam Hotel in Tobruk.

In the first elections round, Al-Shalmani got 56 votes but his rival, Ibrahim Shaka, was ahead with 58 votes, as the third competitor, Jamal Abu Nuwara, got only three votes. In the second round, Al-Shalmani won against Shaka 62 to 54: only 116 members of the LFF out of 120 attended the elections.

Al-Shalmani has been bitterly critiqued by football fans and people who work in the sports sector for his way of work, as many observers believe his approach led to the humiliating exit of Libyan national team from the first round of CHAN 2021 and losing hope in the qualifiers of AFCON by losing last Thursday 2-5 to Tunisia in the first match played on Libyan soil in seven years.

He was criticized also for failing to Kickstart the Libyan Football League for two years in a row and the delay in this season as well as Libyan Football League only featured six matches so far while neighboring countries' leagues are about to end.



A sense of humor can be helpful during crisis times. In light of the tumultuous events the country has experienced -from the political and social fragmentation to Covid-19- cartoonist Alajili Elabidi set up a cartoon gallery hoping it would help quell tension.

The exhibition organized by the Libyan Association for Plastic Arts was inaugurated on Saturday at the Art House of Tripoli under the theme "Satirical Diaries" and will run until April 1.

Elabidi indicated, in statements to The Libya Observer, that his art addresses the political and social aspects of society through humor and satire.

"The gallery includes my art collection from the year 2013 to 2020, in which I shed light on the suffering of ordinary people, as they grapple with the daily hardship on all fronts," Elabidi said.

In his artwork, Elabidi invites visitors to make sense of humanitarian issues through different conceptualizations, including peace, immigration, injustice, freedom of expression, wars, and hunger. Art is not a luxury, but it stems from the sufferings of human beings, from the difficulties of daily life, such as the cost-of-living,

beings, from the difficulties of daily life, such as the cost-of-living, tyranny, the encroachment of officeholders, and their disregard for the people's concerns."

He said that all this provokes the artist and nudges him to reach out to his tools to capture the suffering of those people and frame it into a piece of art hoping it would bring them some justice.

Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Al-Dbiebah, and Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development Mabrouka Touji Othman were among the first visitors to show up at the exhibition.

Germany, Libya discuss cultural cooperation



A delegation from the German Embassy in Libya discussed on Sunday with the Libyan Antiquities Authority, cultural cooperation between the two countries.

This came during the delegation's visit to the Red Castle in Tripoli. "My colleagues discussed a cooperation agreement with the Libyan department of antiquities to strengthen capacities in safeguarding national archives", the German ambassador, Oliver Owcza said in a tweet.

Education

People of Waddan protest the continued suspension of studies in Jufra municipality



A number of residents of the city of Waddan expressed on Sunday their opposition and dissatisfaction at the continued suspension of studies in the Jufra municipality, condemning the measures taken by the Steering Council earlier in this regard.

The protesters called on the Ministry of Education to reopen schools while taking precautionary measures to combat the Coronavirus epidemic.





weather



Tripoli Weather Forecast				
Fri 02	25° /17°	Sunny	/ 1%	⇒ SSE 12 km/h
Sat 03	29° /20°	Partly Cloudy	✓ 8%	→ SW 13 km/h
Sun 04	26° /19°	Mostly Cloudy	✓ 14%	➾ WNW 16 km/f
Mon 05	23° /15°	Partly Cloudy	/ 15%	⊰ N 19 km/h
Tue 06	25° /18°	Mostly Sunny	√ 8%	♣ E 21 km/h
Wed 07	28° /18°	Partly Cloudy	1 1%	♣ E 18 km/h
Thu 08	25° /17°	Partly Cloudy	/ 1%	⊰ NNW 18 km/h

Photo of the Week





It is a bridge located in the Green Mountain (Jabal Al-Akhdar) district, 20 km west of Bayda city, eastern Libya. It links the cities of Bayda and Al-Marj. It is considered the highest bridge in the country and the second highest bridge in Africa.

It is also considered one of the most important landmarks in the region.

It was designed by the Italian civil engineer Riccardo Morandi. Its construction began in 1965 and it cost 5.300.000 million dollars.

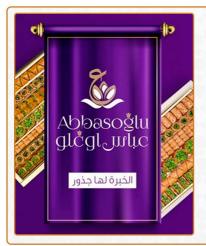
The bridge was opened in 1972. It crosses the Kouf Valley. It is about 282 meters long, and 160 meters in height. For seven years, its 282 meters central span was the longest concrete cable-stayed bridge span in the world. On 25 October 2017, the Security Directorate of the Green Mountain region in east Libya called on the security services to close down Wadi El-Kuf bridge, following inspections that identified potential fractures in the bridge. The following day, road transport engineers inspected the bridge and stated that it needed emergency maintenance but was safe.

On 27 October 2017, the bridge was reopened for light traffic, while local security officials were preventing heavily loaded trucks from crossing in groups.

On 8 August 2018 another similar security alert has been reported, but no details about another bridge closure or the structural problems identified is available.

Similar bridge in Genoa, Italy also designed by Morandi and usually called Ponte Morandi, where differently from Wadi El-Kuf, structural problems have been known since the first years after construction in 1967, one of its 3 towers collapsed on 14 August 2018, killing 43.

Another old bridge was built before this one and near it, in the early twentieth century. It was known as "Wadi Jerreib Bridge," and it still exists today, but it is not used.



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