



Libya, Turkey sign 5 new agreements, keep maritime MoU in place

The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah reiterated the significance of the maritime Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a joint press conference after a meeting of the Libya-Turkey Strategic Cooperation Council in Ankara on Monday.

Erdogan said that they had agreed to hold a regional conference for all parties to call for dialogue and cooperation in Eastern Mediterranean in a way that preserves the rights of all states, adding that they had signed five new MoUs with the Libyan Government of National Unity.

Erdogan also said the five MoUs included education, energy, media and reconstruction fields as Libyan and Turkish officials signed a protocol for the beginning of building a new power plant and an MoU for three other power plants as well as an MoU for building a new passengers lounge at the Tripoli International Airport, and another MoU for building a shopping center in Tripoli, in addition to an MoU for strategic cooperation in media.

Erdogan and Dbeibah also signed the joint statement of the first meeting of the Libya-Turkey Strategic Cooperation Council as Dbeibah said that Turkish firms will have the biggest role in reconstruction projects in Libya and added that he looks forward to hosting the next meeting of the high ranking council in Tripoli, voicing appreciation for Turkey's support for Libya, especially in ceasefire measures and for holding the next elections on time.

Meanwhile, Erdogan stressed that the support of Ankara to the legitimate government in Libya helped save Tripoli from collapsing and hindered new massacres as well as ensured the ceasefire implementation, adding that those who supported the coup and putschists in Libya "are partners in the massacres", adding that the mass graves found in Tarhouna "are evidence of those crimes".

Erdogan said his country would continue its support for the Government of National Unity in Libya as it did with the previous legitimate governments as its goal would always be supporting sovereignty and stability, urging the international community to provide honest support to Libya to hold elections on time.

Erdogan and Dbeibah also discussed boosting trade and the speedy return of Turkish private sector companies to work in Libya, explaining that Ankara would provide Libya with 150,000 Coronavirus vaccine doses as well as necessary medicines needed to limit the spread and damage of Covid-19.

Dbeibah and 14 ministers arrived Monday morning in Ankara to meet with Turkish President and officials and convene the first meeting of the Libya-Turkey Strategic Cooperation Council.

Politics

Russian Wagner to send 300 Syrian fighters to support Haftar in Libya, report says

The Turkish newspaper, Daily Sabah, said Russian Wagner Group - a private military contractor linked to the Kremlin - is preparing to send 300 Syrian mercenaries to join Khalifa Haftar's forces in eastern Libya.

The report, citing exclusive sources from the ground, said on Monday that the Syrian mercenaries will come from the Bashar Al-Assad regime-controlled Deir ez-Zor city, adding that the new Syrian mercenary group is comprised of fighters loyal to the regime, Iran-backed foreign groups and volunteers from Al-Assad's Army.

The newspaper also said that the group is currently receiving training in Syria and will be sent to eastern Libya - Benghazi city - toward the end of April.

The Turkish newspaper explained that sources had indicated that sending a new Syrian mercenaries' group to Libya amid efforts for lasting peace and stability in the country indicated that Haftar could not fathom being shelved into the background as he wanted to take part in the leadership of Libya.

Wagner Group mercenaries have been supporting Haftar's forces since 2018 and their role was essential to Haftar's war on Tripoli between April 2019 and June 2020. When they retreated from western Libya as they lost the battle to the Libyan Army under the Government of National Accord, they moved to Sirte and Jufra positions, while some of them were positioned at the oil crescent region, according to reports by UN experts and other international media.



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Politics

Minister of Interior discusses with Turkish counterpart lifting entry visas for Libyans



Interior Minister Khaled Mazen stressed during a meeting with his Turkish counterpart, Suleyman Soyly, the importance of lifting the visas for Libyans wishing to travel to Turkey and facilitating procedures related to this aspect in a way that contributes to serving the common interests of both countries.

On the sidelines of the Libyan-Turkish Council for High-Level Strategic Cooperation meeting held in Ankara, Mazen expressed the depth of the historical relations that bind the two countries, stressing the importance of strengthening these ties in all security fields, according to a statement by the media office of Libya's Interior Ministry.

The two sides discussed aspects of security cooperation, especially with regard to combating illegal immigration, security training, and rehabilitation, in addition to countering terrorism, border control, and exchange of experiences in the field of drug control and munitions disposal operations.

Politics

HNEC signs agreement with Arab Maghreb Union



The High National Elections Commission (HNEC) has signed a cooperation agreement with the General Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union.

The HNEC stated that the agreement comes within the framework of regional support for the democratic process in Libya and the integration of cooperation and relations in the electoral field between neighboring countries.

The agreement includes cooperation in organizing conferences and seminars which contribute to strengthening the culture of Democracy in all Libyan society.

It also emphasizes the importance of cooperation between member states on issues related to elections and institutional capability building generally.



Dbeibah and Akar discuss present situation in Libya

The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity (GNU),

Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, held discussions with the Turkish Minister of Defense, Hulusi Akar, on Monday, regarding the latest developments in Libya.

The two sides met on the sidelines of an official visit by Dbeibah to Ankara, where he attended a high-level strategic cooperation council meeting between both countries.

Akar stated during the meeting that Turkey's aim is to contribute to the formation of a unified Libya, regionally and politically to enable stability and peace in the country.

He stressed that his country would continue to provide assistance, training and advisory support in the fields of security and defense for their Libyan brothers.

Economy

Brega Oil Company opens first gas cylinder filling station



Brega Petroleum Marketing Company of Libya announced the opening of the first gas cylinder filling station, with a production capacity of 450 cylinders per hour.

According to a company statement, this filling platform has been installed near the Tripoli oil depot and will allow citizens to fill their cylinders directly without the necessity to replace them.

The company stated that this station is set to be the first in the company's history and would mark the opening of other gas filling stations affiliated to the company in all of its gas centers throughout all regions.



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Economy Minister: Libya keen on returning Turkish firms

The Libyan Minister of Economy and Trade, Mohammed Al-Huweij, has confirmed that Libya is keen on boosting cooperation with Turkey, through revising and updating trade agreements as well as placing a joint work-plan for the return of Turkish companies to resume projects in Libya and make new investments.

Al-Huweij said those remarks in a meeting with Turkish Trade Minister, Ruhsar Pekcan, on the margins of the visit of the Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah and an accompanying delegation to Ankara, where they convened the first meeting of the Libya-Turkey Strategic Cooperation Council in the presence of the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Al-Huweij said the Libya-Turkey economic committee should convene soon to activate the free zones and industrial areas as well as resume work on suspended projects with the participation of the businesspersons and Commerce and Industry Chambers Union.

Meanwhile, Pekcan reiterated Ankara's keenness to boost cooperation with Libya and the need for the return of Turkish firms to resume work in the country, especially in reconstruction and infrastructure projects as well as education and health amid other fields.



Economy

Tunisia eyes reconstruction opportunities in Libya

Tunisia aims for a share of Libya's new government's plans to spend on development projects as the country moves towards peace and stability.

"Investment fields in Libya are wide and there are great opportunities to contribute to the reconstruction efforts in the country," the head of the Tunisian-Libyan Council for Economic Cooperation and Partnership, Kamal Ben Ali told the Tunis Afrique Presse.

"This depends on the extent of Tunisia's ability to unify efforts and adjust its partnership strategy with Libya, as well as gathering capabilities and competencies amid the growing and strong competition from Turkey and Egypt," Ben Ali added.

The council's head emphasized the importance of the government's role in facilitating and ensuring permanent and continuous movement between the two countries by reviewing partnership agreements, providing guarantees to Tunisians' safety in Libya, and addressing financial transactions.

He indicated that Tunisia has directed four health convoys to Libya to assess the potential of the health sector in the neighbouring country in order to identify opportunities for employing Tunisian competencies, as he put it.

Economy

Oil Minister, Maltese Finance Minister discuss strengthening cooperation in trade, oil fields



Minister of Oil and Gas in the National Unity Government, Mohammed Aoun, discussed on Thursday, with the Maltese Minister of Finance and Labour, Clyde Caruana, a number of files of common interest in the field of trade and oil dealings between the two countries.

During the meeting, which was held in Tripoli, the two sides also discussed the file of the continental shelf in the Mediterranean between Libya and Malta, and the possibilities of exploiting the common economic potentials in this region.

For his part, Aoun indicated that he would discuss this file with the Libyan authorities, as it concerns Libya's sovereignty and needs prior coordination, the ministry stated on its official Facebook page.

Economy

Libya, Algeria to set up free trade zone



Algeria is seeking to launch a free zone for trade exchange with Libya through two border zones, Algerian Trade Minister Kamal Rezig said on Tuesday.

"The free zone extends across the border governorates of Illizi and Wadi Souf (southeast) of Algeria," Rezig explained during the opening ceremony of the Algerian-Libyan Business Forum in the capital Algiers, confirming that the project has already been put into effect. The minister provided no details about the launch date.

According to Rezig, the step comes in the context of raising the trade volume between both countries, calling on the Algerian businessmen to invest and develop a strong partnership with their Libyan counterparts.

The Algerian-Libyan Business Forum kicked off last Tuesday under the auspices of the Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with more than 300 participants from both countries.

Opinions

What are we going to do?

By Walid Al-Rtimi, a political analyst

tar is now adopting the American position politically, as he wears a necktie, presents a clear electoral speech, receives social components and feminist activities, and is met at the presidential level in Egypt, etc.

Haftar also will not be late in adopting the armed Russian position in a moment, if the opportunity arises, as he went out ahead of his sons in military maneuvers with live ammunition, armored vehicles and Russian aircraft, as the influx of Russian weapons did not stop, and the news about the presence of Russian officers at a higher level and form than Wagner's.

The question is ... What are we going to do?

What are we going to do in presence of a presidential council that overlooks all the hostile behavior of Haftar at a time Al-Haddad has not given the status of chief of staff and Qununu has been prevented from speaking?

What are we going to do under a government that does not see itself concerned with the political scene and suffers from a clear defect in its composition, but rather visits Abu Dhabi on a moonless night?

What are we going to do in light of the utter silence of a political current that is content with modest leaflets on social media?

What are we going to do when everyone sees how all sacrifices are multiplied by zero?

What are we going to do in the face of an alarming security scene in western Libya?

Do we continue the superficial questioning of electoral promises to Haftar?

Shall we continue the rough comparison between Haftar and Gaddafi?

Do we keep asking the easy questions that we know the answers to?

Should we wait for one of the two, either Haftar wins the elections or returns to militarily again?

Enough of intellectual laziness and tolerance of things, we must face the truth and serious and sincere patriotic work to avoid any scenario that threatens our future in a more serious and difficult way.

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



Libya's FDA okays use of imported Coronavirus vaccines

The Libyan Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has given the green light for the use of the imported Coronavirus vaccines: Sputnik V and AstraZeneca, saying in a presser on Tuesday that the tested samples of the vaccines rendered them ready for human use.

The Director of the FDA, Emhemed Al-Gallal, said samples of Sputnik V and AstraZeneca vaccines underwent document control, lab and bacterial tests as well as physiological and chemical ones, including tests on lab mice.

Al-Gallal said the reports after all tests proved the vaccines were ready for human use. This came after the FDA postponed the process of vaccination to carry out the needed sample tests.



WHO representative conducts visit to NCDC in Misrata

The World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Libya, Elizabeth Hof, made an official visit a few days ago to the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) HQ in Misrata city to learn about the branch's activities and its role in confronting the pandemic and limiting its spread within the region.

The WHO representative met with the centre's officials in the presence of the organization's representative for the central region, the head of the health committee of the Misrata Municipal Council, and representative of Doctors Without Borders, according to a statement by the NCDC on Monday.

The head of the Community Health Reference Laboratory in the branch gave a visual presentation on the laboratory's work besides some statistics related to the detection tests for the coronavirus.

For her part, Hof praised the efforts made by the center in confronting the pandemic within the municipality.

It is worth noting that the NCDC Misrata Branch is considered one of the leading branches of the NCDC in terms of detection and control of the coronavirus pandemic.

Health

Drug Control: Covid-19 vaccine shipments will be released within three days



The Director of the Food and Drug Control Center, Abdullah Abdullah, called on the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) to not start the Covid-19 vaccinations until completing the approval procedures.

According to the letter addressed to the NCDC by the food and drug control, the tests to ensure the safety of the Sputnik and AstraZeneca vaccines against the coronavirus will be completed within three days.

"The vaccine shipments have been temporarily released but distributing them before completion of the approval procedures, including the issuance of the release certificate is a violation of the established procedures," the letter read.

The food and drug centre called on the NCDC to reserve the vaccine shipments in stores until undergoing all the evaluation measures, insisting it will not bear responsibility for any breaches in this regard.

For his part, the Director of the Vaccination Department, Abdul Basit Samiu, confirmed that the vaccines in the stores approved by the National Center for Disease Control have not yet been distributed.

In a press statement, Samiu reiterated that they will not start distributing the vaccine until receiving the final report from the Food and Drug Control Center, indicating that the vaccination of officials a few days ago was a ceremonial event to mark the launching of the campaign and a message of reassurance to the people that the vaccine is safe.

The Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity (GNU), Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, on Saturday, inaugurated the national campaign for vaccination against coronavirus from the NCDC headquarters in Souk Al-Jum'aa Municipality, by receiving the first shot of the vaccine, accompanied by several ministers of his cabinet.

Health

WHO takes part in Libyan national Coronavirus vaccination campaign



The Representative of World Health Organization (WHO) in Libya, Elizabeth Hoff, took the Coronavirus vaccine, along with other WHO office in Libya's workers, as part of the start of the Libyan national vaccination campaign in Tripoli.

Hoff said she was happy to see the vaccination campaign start in Libya, adding in a video statement on Facebook Sunday that she was looking forward to seeing all health workers and first responders, especially those working at the quarantine centers, take the vaccine.

She also said that she liked the keenness and professionalism of the Libyan National Center for Disease Control, adding that the vaccines arrived last Thursday and the center started work on Saturday.

"Vaccines are a good tool to use against the Coronavirus, yet we should keep wearing masks and maintain social distance. Taking the Covid-19 vaccine doesn't mean we can stop being careful," Hoff said.

The Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah and Health Minister Ali Al-Zenati, as well as the deputy head of the Presidential Council Mossa Al-Koni, all took the vaccine on Saturday, announcing the start of the vaccination campaign in the country.

Health

Libya: Coronavirus vaccination campaign begins



The Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah announced Saturday, in a presser at the National Center for Disease Control, the start of Covid-19 vaccination campaign in the country.

Dbeibah said he and his family members took the vaccine and that the vaccination measures are going well as planned, adding that vaccination centers will be open in the coming days as vaccine doses keep arriving in Libya piecemeal.

Dbeibah indicated that the vaccines didn't arrive in Libya through money but through state policies and contacts with over 10 countries, adding that the vaccines are approved by the World Health Organization and "there is no need to listen to rumors about them".

The National Center for Disease Control said the vaccination campaign had kicked off from its headquarters in Tripoli with the Prime Minister and Health Minister taking the vaccine as a start. On Friday, a third batch of Coronavirus vaccines arrived in Libya, containing 100.000 doses of Sputnik V vaccine.



Local

Minister of State for Displaced Affairs discusses situation of IDPs in Benghazi

The Minister of State for Displaced Affairs and Human Rights, Ahmed Abu Khuzam, met on Sunday, in Benghazi with the Chairman of the Steering Council of the Municipality of Benghazi, Al-Saqr Imran Boujwari.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the measures taken to address the situation of the displaced inside the camps in the city, as well as the file of the displaced from the city of Benghazi.

The minister stressed the need to achieve national reconciliation and redress for all affected parties, confirming that this is one of the priorities of the work of the National Unity Government.

Local

Zliten women leaders discuss role of women within municipality's sectors and institutions



A number of women leaders from Zliten headed by Municipal Council member, Kholoud Abu Sneina have held a meeting at the Zliten municipality office, to discuss the role of women within the sectors and institutions in the municipality, as well as the obstacles they face.

The meeting concluded with the emphasis on intensifying efforts and cooperation in order to raise the status of women in the municipality, in addition to the need to activate the Office of Support and Empowerment of Women in the education sector.

Education

Misrata takes award for best Private Education Office



The Misrata Office for Private Education has won the best private education office award for the academic year 2019-2020, followed by Hay Al-Andalus office in second place while Sabha came third.

The Ministry of Education held a ceremony on the occasion, Saturday at the College of Tourism and Hospitality in Misurata, in the presence of the Education Minister Musa Al-Maqrif and other officials.

The Minister stressed the importance of following this approach in all education sectors, saying it fosters the spirit of competition between public and private education.

Meanwhile, the Director of the Private Education Department at the Ministry of Education considered the competition, which was held for the second consecutive season as a step forward towards supporting private education, expressing hope that it will extend to include other private education offices in the eastern region during the year 2020-2021.

The Director of the Misrata Office for Private Education Ahmed Mashayit praised in his address at the ceremony the efforts made by the people working in this sector in Misrata.

"I dedicate this award to all the employees at the Private Education Office and the Education Monitoring Office in my city," Mashayit said.



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Fri 16	32°/16°		Partly Cloudy	8%	SW 25 km/h
Sat 17	21°/15°		Partly Cloudy	12%	NNW 20 km/h
Sun 18	21°/13°		PM Light Rain	68%	ENE 22 km/h
Mon 19	18°/12°		AM Showers	56%	NW 28 km/h
Tue 20	22°/15°		Sunny	3%	NW 15 km/h
Wed 21	24°/17°		Mostly Sunny	1%	E 22 km/h
Thu 22	25°/18°		Partly Cloudy	8%	ESE 27 km/h

Photo of the Week



Features

The Mountain Town of Jadu

Jadu is an Amazigh town in western Libya, in the Nafusa Mountains and the Jabal Al-Gharbi District, its about 180 km away from Tripoli.

It is surrounded by Al-Rujban on the east and Al-Raheibat on the west.

It is considered one of the most important towns in Nafusa Mountains, as it was, more than once, the capital of the Nafusa Mountains.

The population of the area followed by the city is approximately 117,000.

Among the most important tourist areas in Jadu: Archaeological Tarmesa and Muqout, a village with a rich spring of water, and the blue eye, which is a lake located at the bottom of the mountain.

Jadu economy depends on olive cultivation, olive oil production, sheep breeding, traditional industries, and is famous for the Libyan national costume industry known as 'Al-Jard'.

History:

One of its sons, the mujahid, Suleiman Al-Baroni, who was the leader of the jihad in western Libya and the Governor of the Libyan province during the period of Ottoman rule after he represented the Nafusa Mountain (Western Mountain) in the Ottoman envoys council.

Jadu was the site of an Italian concentration camp during the Second World War. In 1942, about 2,600 Jews and other people, who were considered undesirables, were rounded up throughout Libya and sent to the Jadu camp. 564 died from typhus and other privations. The camp was liberated by the British Army in January 1943.



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