

Politics

Libyan representative at Arab League: Haftar's supporters changed tone after his forces' defeat



The Libyan representative at the Arab League Saleh Al-Shamakhi said the countries supporting Khalifa Haftar had changed tone after his forces' defeat in Tripoli, saying they started calling for political dialogue after years of hindering peace and ceasefire efforts in the country.

In a speech at the emergency ministerial meeting of the Arab League, the representative added that Libyan Army forces defeated Haftar's forces after his country supporters gave him logistical support, and soldiers of fortune, including Russian Wagner Group mercenaries and others.

"Haftar's supporters now call for dialogue but they should now be at international courts as Libya will start holding them accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity." Al-Shamakhi added, saying - in reference to El Sisi - those who speak of a red line should know that all of Libya is a red line drawn by the blood of martyrs.

He also said that those who propose initiatives for peace in Libya should be neutral to all parties of the conflict and should not use statements that resemble a declaration of war against the legitimate government in the country.

The Arab League meeting was held Tuesday after being pushed down Sunday for the objection of the Libyan Foreign Ministry that said it wasn't given prior coordination with the bloc being the country concerned with the meeting's agenda, saying it has the right to appeal any of fear meeting's outcomes.

The Foreign Ministry also decreased the diplomatic representation at the Arab League meeting due to the double standards system of the bloc, saying it didn't even convene any meetings since April 2019 as per Libya's calls.

The Presidential Council media office said the meeting discussed the latest military and security situations and US efforts to achieve stability in Libya, not to mention the cooperation in fighting terrorism between the Government of National Accord and the US.

The closed meeting in Zuwara, according to sources speaking to The Libya Observer, went over military issues, which could explain why Foreign Minister Mohammed Sayala wasn't present. The source added that the meeting could have talked about the Sirte military operations and the way to handle the Russian presence in Libya as Haftar had recruited thousands of Wagner Group mercenaries.

Local media also said that the meeting discussed as well the return of AFRICOM military personnel to Libya, knowing that they left Tripoli when Haftar led his offensive on the capital in April 2019.

Politics

Egypt's Sisi threatens military intervention in Libya



The Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi said Sirte and Jufra cities in Libya are a red line for Egypt's security, adding that his country won't allow the Government of National Accord of Libya to cross the red line.

Sisi added in an address to Egyptian Army forces on the border with Libya that his country was willing to arm Libyan tribes and train Libyan youths to defend their land.

He also said that Libya won't settle as long as "armed militias" are present there, saying Egyptian forces will intervene in Libya alongside Libyan tribes to get the job done and then leave.

"Some countries are supporting terrorist militias and fueling war in Libya. A ceasefire must hold now in Libya, or else any intervention by Egypt in the country will be legitimate as per international laws."

Sisi said, adding that his country's army is one of the strongest in the region and can defend Egypt's national security inside and outside the borders.

Egypt has been intervening in Libya for over six years by providing Haftar with political and military support, let alone carrying out airstrikes in Benghazi, Derna and Tripoli in support of Haftar's forces.

Meanwhile, many Egyptian opposition figures ridiculed the Egyptian regime for the announcements of the death of soldiers in Sinai at the time of Tripoli offensive, which they say have stopped after the fighting has ended.

Politics

Top Libyan GNA officials meet with US AFRICOM commander in Zuwara



The Head of the Libyan Presidential Council Fayez Al-Sarraj met in Zuwara with the United States Africa Command (US AFRICOM) Stephen Townsend, in the presence of a US military delegation, US ambassador to Libya Richard Norland and the Libyan Interior Minister Fathi Bashagha, military commander Osama Juwiali, Sirte-Jufra Operations Room commander Ibrahim Baytalmal, and the deputy Defense Minister Salah Al-Namroush, as well as other military officials.

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Politics

Presidential Council says Sisi's threats are declaration of war on Libya



The Presidential Council said in a statement on Sunday that Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi's threats are rejected and they constitute a declaration of war on Libya.

The Libyan Presidential Council of the Government of National Accord said the intervention in Libyan affairs and encroachment on its sovereignty by Egyptian President El Sisi amount to a blatant violation of state sovereignty and a declaration of war, adding that the GNA is the only legitimate government in Libya and has the right to sign agreements with countries of its own choosing.

"We won't allow Sisi to use the language of threats against the Libyan people. The red lines are drawn by the blood of the martyrs in Libya and we as the legitimate government decide the place and time of our military operations on Libyan soil." The Presidential Council said.

The statement also said that Haftar's supporting countries started to talk about peace and political dialogue just after Haftar's forces had been defeated and their dictatorship and military rule project had collapsed.

"The Egyptian President's words are a violation of Libyan sovereignty and this is, along with the support of putschists and warlords, is unacceptable. The dispute among Libyans is a reality but we won't allow it to be used as a pretext to pose threats to Libyans. Libya as a whole is a red line for us and the red lines are drawn by the blood of martyrs not statements of some countries." The Presidential Council said.

It called on the international community to take up responsibility toward such hostile threats toward the Libyan people, who were threatened by Egypt's Sisi when he said Saturday that his country's army could legitimately intervene in Libya as per international laws.

The Turkish Presidential spokesman warned against a rushed truce, saying a rushed ceasefire would not lead to what the legitimate government wants to achieve for all Libyans.

Kalin indicated that France was jeopardizing NATO security by supporting Haftar, whose forces have been conducting an offensive to take the capital Tripoli since April last year.

"In Libya, we are supporting the legitimate government and the French government is supporting an illegitimate warlord and jeopardizing NATO security, Mediterranean security, North African security and Libya's political stability." Kalin said.

On Friday, Kalin said Turkey was seeking to achieve stability and peace in Libya, but Haftar had violated the Berlin Conference ceasefire agreement many times, yet countries like Russia and France still supported him.

He reiterated support for the legitimate GNA and said that Turkey had regained the balance in Libya, where a political solution is the only way out of the conflict.

Politics

Abu Dhabi sends shots of criticism to its defeated ally Haftar



The United Arab Emirates' Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar Gargash, has delivered rare criticism of their ally Khalifa Haftar after he suffered major battlefield defeats at the hands of the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), Bloomberg reported.

Bloomberg added that Gargash said in an online forum Wednesday that some of "Abu Dhabi friends had taken their own unilateral decisions," referring to Yemen and Libya, in which he said that the UAE had seen such unilateral behavior in Haftar in Libya.

"A lot of these unilateral calculations have proven wrong. These are calculations that sometimes you don't really have the control or the sort of moral advice that you want on some of your friends." Gargash added.

Gargash indicated that the UAE is in support of the initiative developed by Egypt and the Speaker of Libya's Tobruk-based House of Representatives, Aqila Saleh.

Gargash also criticized Turkey for its support for the GNA, saying that right now, "Turkey is the only country objecting to an immediate comprehensive ceasefire and the next battle over Sirte is really problematic." Haftar, who is basically funded by the UAE to wage his war on his opponents in Libya in an attempt to bring back military rule to Libya, has suffered a humiliating defeat in western Libya as GNA forces liberated all of southern Tripoli, and other western region cities, like Tarhouna, from his grip.

Politics

Turkey says Haftar's forces must pull out of Sirte and Jufra for a Libya ceasefire



The Turkish Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said reaching a permanent ceasefire in Libya would require Khalifa Haftar's forces to withdraw from Sirte.

Ibrahim Kalin told AFP that Turkey supports the position of the UN-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and said that a ceasefire would be possible only if everybody went back to their 2015 positions, saying Sirte and Jufra needed to be evacuated by Haftar's forces for a "sustainable ceasefire."

He said Haftar's forces are using strategic locations as a launchpad against the legitimate government, adding that they are also using those places to exploit Libya's oil resources to finance their war.

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Economy

NOC: Approximately \$6 billion recorded in losses due to the closure of ports and fields



The National Oil Corporation (NOC) said that the total loss due to closure of ports and oil fields is in the region of \$6 billion, after 157 days of forced closures.

This came in a brief statement published by the NOC's official website, without any additional information.

Loyalists of the Warlord Khalifa Haftar closed the Libyan oil export fields and ports since January 17, in a move they described as "draining the sources of support for militias fighting under the banner of the Government of National Accord."

Economy

Libya, Tunisia resume border trading under safety measures



Libya and Tunisia have resumed trading operations, allowing cargo trucks to transit goods in between, via Ras Ijder crossing border, after months of suspension due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

The director of Ras Ijder border, brigadier general Abu Rabi Makhoulf emphasized that the handover and receipt operations are carried out according to specific conditions set by a Libyan-Tunisian committee specialized in this regard.

Makhoulf explained that the trucks stop at a specific point at each sides of the border to have their cargo checked in terms of health and expiry date. After, another driver from the other side of the border takes over, and drives the truck to its final destination in the importing country.

Libya and Tunisia agreed last April to resume commercial traffic after setting a joint mechanism to ensure control of virus spreading across the border, especially with truck drivers.

Economy

Algeria studies resuming Sonatrach activities in Libya

The Algerian Energy Ministry has referred to ongoing contacts with the Libyan side, regarding the resumption of the state company "Sonatrach" activities in Libya, under certain conditions, as part of the agreement signed between the two sides at the beginning of the year 2018.

The Algerian Energy Minister, Mohamed Arqab said in a hearing on the Finance and Budget Committee in Parliament that Sonatrach would resume its activities abroad "if it is profitable".

He confirmed that coordination is underway with the Libyan Ministry of Energy so the company could resume its activities as soon as the appropriate conditions are in place, including the security situation.

Economy

Turkey seeks to provide Libya with a floating power station to relieve the problem of power cuts



The Turkish 'Daily Sabah' has quoted an official of the Turkish company Karadeniz Holding as confirming its willingness to supply various regions of Libya with electricity, within 30 to 60 days.

The head of the energy trade group of the company, Zainab Harazi, explained the possibility of providing electricity supply to the electrical network of Libya by 1000 megawatts, as a short-term solution to the power outages.

This would be done by connecting floating power stations to the grid, of which Karadeniz Holding has 19, most of which serve the needs of 11 different countries.

UNHCR, WFP to provide food assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in Libya



USA for
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in conjunction with the World Food Program (WFP), announced the initiation of a project to provide food assistance to approximately 10,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Libya.


The UNHCR said that the move comes as a result of reports that many refugees and asylum seekers within the country are unable to find employment to support themselves since the enforced curfew began in Libya.

It has also remarked that food prices and the cost of basic commodities have increased in the country by approximately 24%, adding to the suffering of this highly vulnerable group.

Opinions

How to soften the impact of coronavirus during conflict

By Gerardo Noto, Resident Representative, UNDP Libya

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The rapid spread of coronavirus COVID-19 has shocked the world, with more than 150,000 people dead and more than two million confirmed cases. The International Labour Organization estimates the global economy will lose more than 195 million jobs.

It is expected that the pandemic will hit developing countries harder, with income losses exceeding US\$220 billion and nearly half of all workers in Africa losing their jobs. An effective response must be driven by solidarity, science, and human rights, whilst focusing on the most vulnerable.



For the United Nations, and for UNDP in particular, poverty, climate change, inequality, and conflict are relevant to the whole of humanity. For this reason, we have been listening to people and experts and working to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

The COVID-19 crisis will be felt in education, human rights and, in the most severe cases, basic food security and nutrition, especially for the estimated 55 percent of the people in the world with no social protection.

It is important to keep in mind that total number of confirmed cases does not provide an accurate picture as, such as in Libya, there is a lack of testing capacity.

The need to respond to the global health crisis only adds to the protracted security, political and economic crises. People in Libya live in permanent uncertainty and fear, as open conflict continues.

This new challenge comes to under-resourced hospitals and a fragile health system, plus poor urban planning, the weak waste disposal services, and even traffic congestion, which slows down emergency vehicles and first responders.

For years UNDP, and other UN agencies have been supporting public institutions, local governments, civil society and communities in Libya to achieve stabilization, resilience and recovery, and contributing to shaping the conditions for peace and social cohesion in the west, east and south of the country.

In coordination with public institutions and the United Nations, we are responding to COVID-19 in three ways.

The first is supporting national and local institutions to strengthen their health systems. With support from 13 international partners, our Stabilization Facility for Libya, and with funds from the European Union, our resilience programme continues supporting all three regions of Libya with health infrastructure, health waste management, and water and sanitation equipment.

We are providing key strategic health infrastructure and medical equipment, upgrade capacities for local production of protection gear, help to the Ministry of Health to build isolation rooms in hospitals and clinics, as well as provide technical assistance to design medical oxygen plants and buy hospital beds, oxygen cylinders and coronavirus test kits.

We are supporting Ministry of Justice to prevent and control COVID-19 in prisons.

We are also working with the Libya Accelerator Lab, part of a UNDP global network, to apply innovative ways and tools to support the COVID-19 response.

The second is bringing all local and national authorities, civil society and the private sector around the table. This will include strengthening institutions for governance and crisis management at national and local level and raising awareness on the exposure and precautions against the virus through a network of communication officers of municipalities in the south, west, and east of the country.

UNDP works with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, so it can move forward with the Berlin peace process and pave the way for a comprehensive political solution, despite the constraints determined by the threat of the virus.

We are hosting online reconciliation forums and advocating for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world issued by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, to fight the common enemy. We are supporting a group of 100 peace mediators from all corners of Libya spreading their word online with the hashtags #unitedagainstcorona #peacenowstopcorona.

The third is addressing the socio-economic and human rights impacts of COVID-19 and safeguarding progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including addressing stigma and discrimination arising from its spread, and supporting marginalized people and vulnerable populations. In Libya we will assess capacities and planning for long term inclusive development with a special focus on most vulnerable groups. We'll implement special measures for those whose livelihoods are most affected and conduct communication and advocacy campaigns engaging with civil society and community organizations to prevent discrimination.

Within the UN system's coordinated response in Libya, we are working to ensure that no one is left behind, that we support preparation, management and recovery of this crisis and develop the capacity for longer term prevention, as we continue making progress towards the SDGs.

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



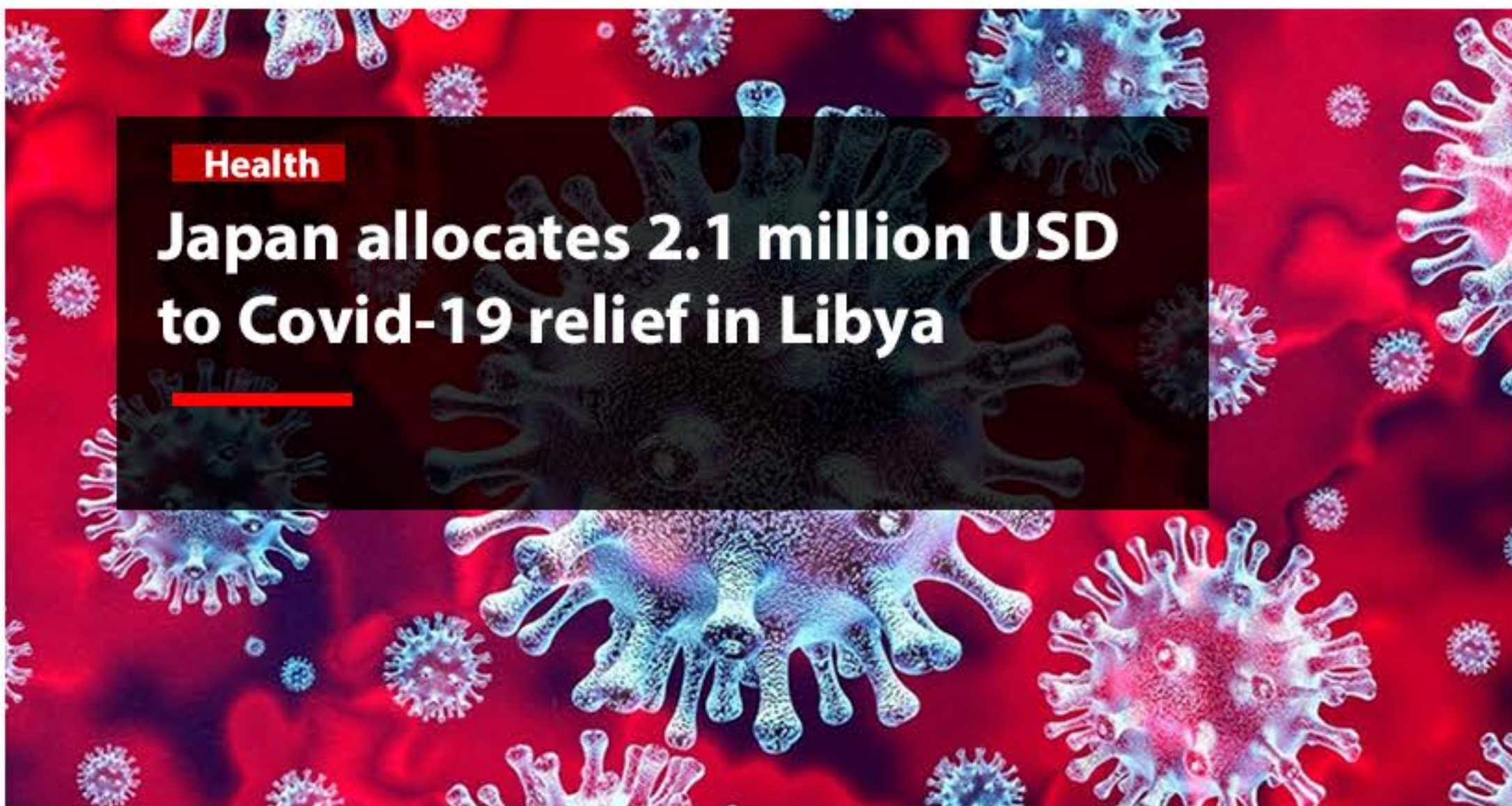
Health
Ministry of Health sends medical supplies to Hun

The Ministry of Health has sent a shipment of medical supplies to Hun town within the efforts to improve health services.

According to the Ministry, the shipment was sent to Al-Afia Hospital and included 10 infant incubators, 10 beds, and 25 wheelchairs, all intended for the relevant Intensive Care Units.

Also included, were surgical implements for major and minor operations, three standard delivery beds, five medical examination beds, ten mobile examination lights, 65 medical stethoscopes and 75 oxygen cylinders.

It contained a generator and a refrigeration unit for use in the morgue for the storage of corpses, which has a hydraulic jack and an anatomy table for post-mortem examinations, along with integrated medical furniture for the various clinics, which includes, five drug storage units.



Health
Japan allocates 2.1 million USD to Covid-19 relief in Libya

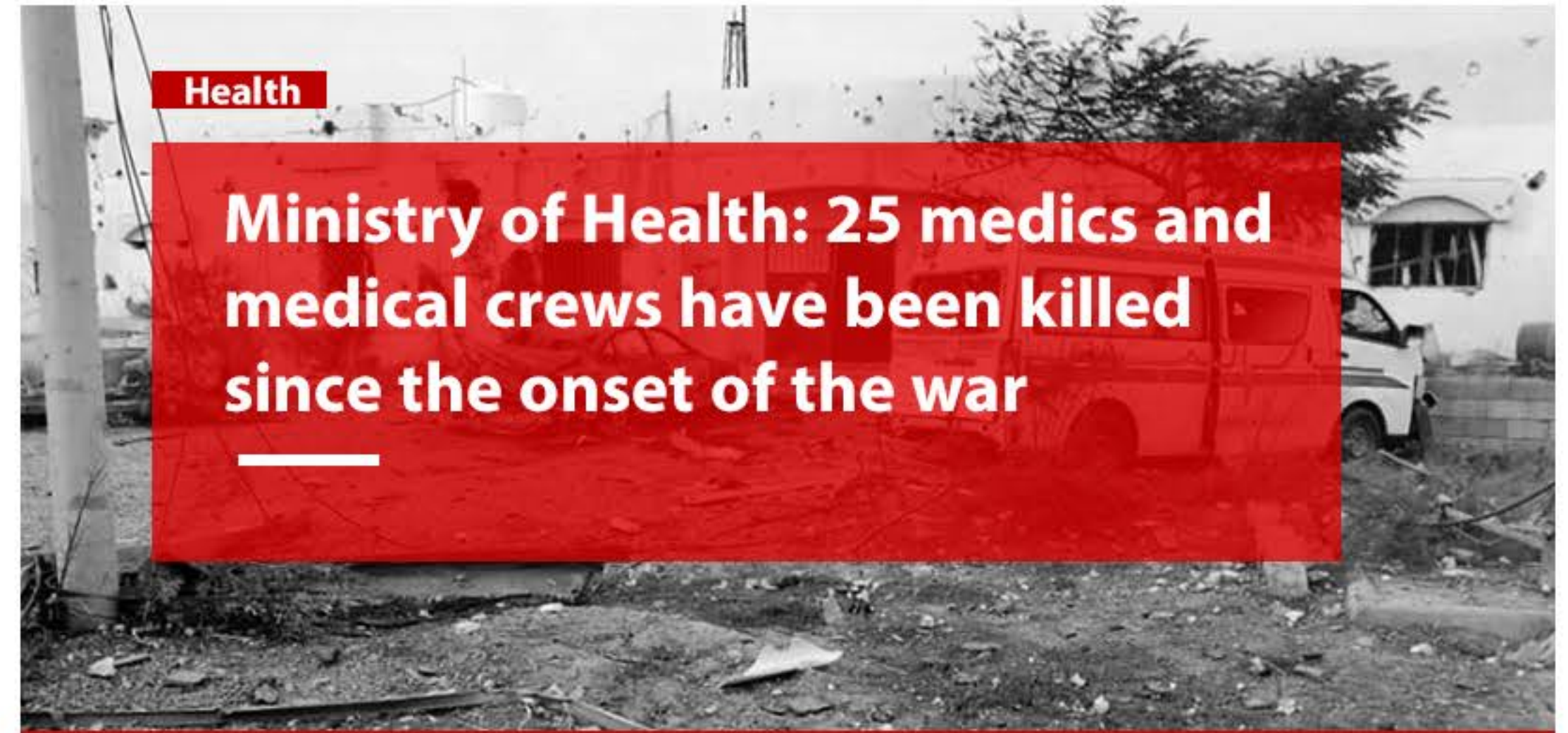
The Government of Japan has allocated \$ 2.1 million USD to UNICEF's Covid-19 relief program in Libya

UNICEF clarified in a statement on its Facebook page on Sunday that the nine months project which will be implemented in partnership with the local authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO), aims to protect the lives of millions by curtailing the Coronavirus in the country.

The program will focus on the most vulnerable children and their families in Libya, UNICEF explains.

UNICEF Special Representative for Libya Abdel-Rahman Ghandour expressed his gratitude to the people and government of Japan, explaining that the funding will help improve infection and prevention control and provide critical medical and water, as well as sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies.

The project will contribute to mitigating the impact of the outbreak for approximately 600,000 women and children in Libya and will reach an estimated 4.8 million people with lifesaving risk communication and community engagement activities, Ghandour indicated. COVID-19 has affected more than 540 people across Libya so far. The rapid spread of the virus shows that the health system is not equipped to respond," UNICEF noted.

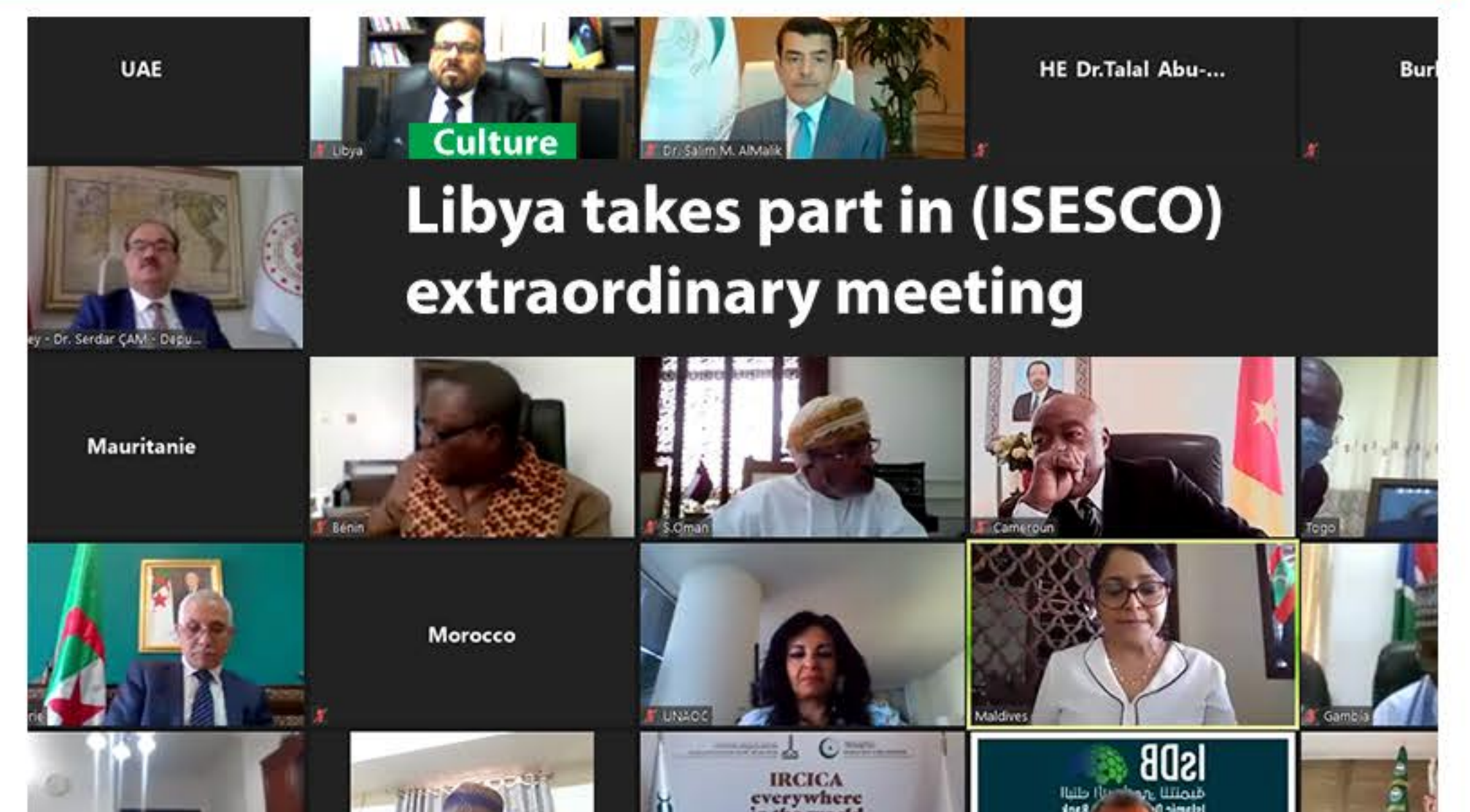


Health
Ministry of Health: 25 medics and medical crews have been killed since the onset of the war

The Media Advisor to the Ministry of Health, Al-Amin Al-Hashemi, announced that 25 medics and medical personnel have been killed since the onset of the war on Tripoli.

He added in a briefing before the Public Liberties and Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives (HoR) in Tripoli, that the Ministry had also registered the wounded to be in excess of 50 people affiliated with the ambulance and field hospitals, during the past 14 months, which accounts for the war period.

He indicated that many health facilities have been "methodically destroyed," according to the Ministry's official Facebook page on Saturday.



Libya takes part in (ISESCO) extraordinary meeting

The head of the General Authority for Culture, Hassan Onis has participated in the ministers of culture extraordinary meeting for the member states of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), which was held via video conference on Wednesday.

The meeting was dedicated to discussing the sustainability of cultural work amid the Covid-19 outbreak.

During his address, Onis highlighted Libya's approach to activating cultural activity through the virtual world, amid the Coronavirus crisis, such as introducing myriad programs and cultural initiatives on the social platforms.

He also put forward several proposals to promote cultural work in these difficult circumstances, including selecting two "culture capitals" each year instead of one, as well as establishing a special fund under the name "Cultural Support Fund" to provide the material and moral support towards protecting and preserving professional activities of cultural and heritage nature.

Onis concluded by calling on the organization to focus on cyberspace, provide expertise, and foster creativity, in addition, to establishing training courses in the fields of culture, heritage, art exhibitions, and media.



Libya was elected as a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), winning 182 in the 192 member General Assembly.

The election process took place during the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Libya along with 17 ECOSOC elected members will serve for two years with effect from Jan.1, 2021, according to a UN statement.

The ECOSOC council is considered the heart of the UN that drives its economic, social and environmental agenda.

It also serves as a key platform for encouraging debate and innovative ideas, forging consensus to move forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals.



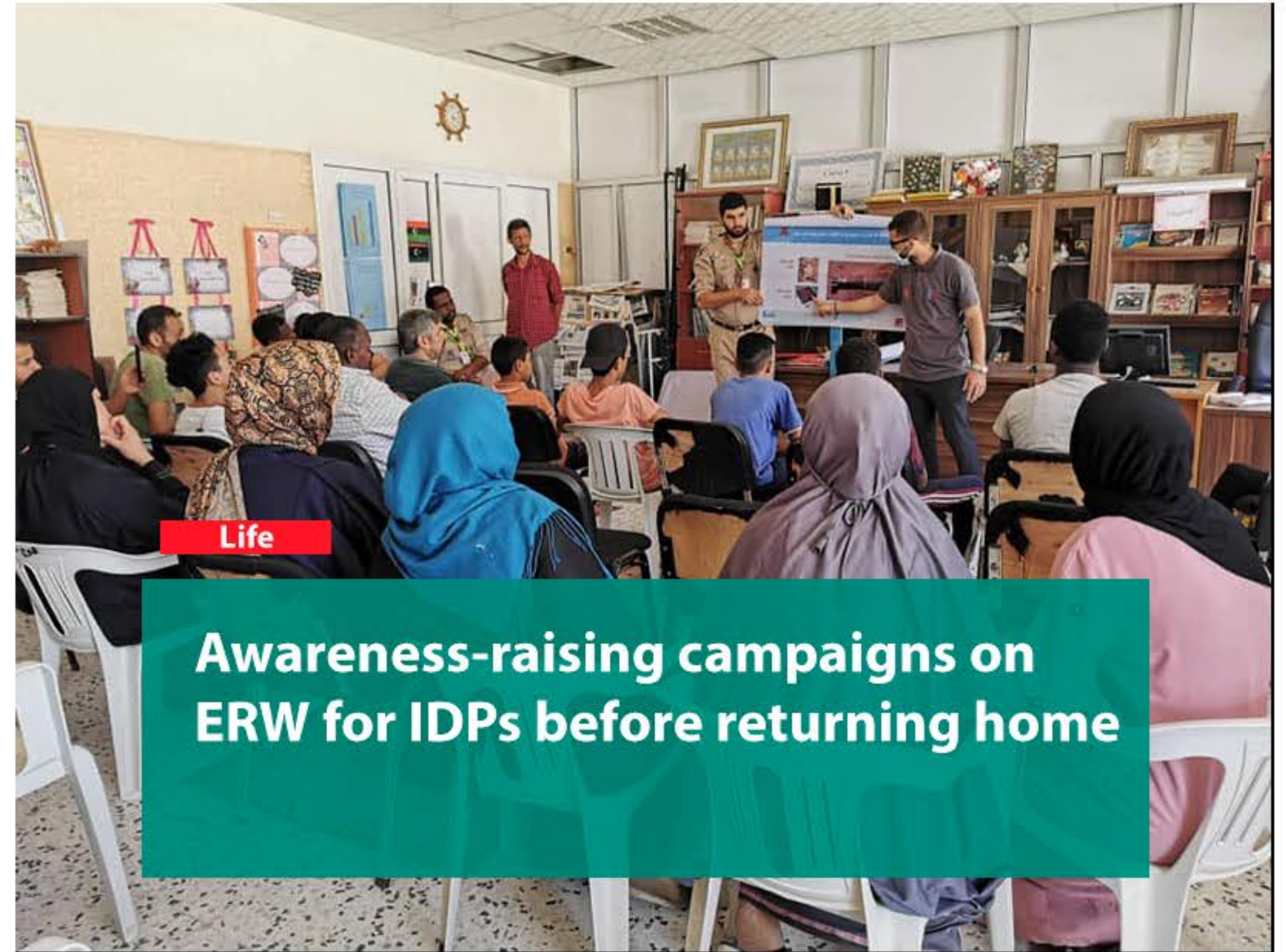
The Social Security Fund in Libya has received four merit awards from the International Social Security Association (ISSA) at the level of the African continent.

The ISSA Award recognizes good practices in the administration of social security and is presented on a regional basis under the supervision of an international Jury.

Libya presented four scientific papers among 96 other entries from 35 institutions in 26 countries.

The Jury decided to give the awards and certificates of merits to the Social Security Fund in Libya which submitted four scientific papers presenting the service quality of its work in the time of conflict, the impact of the Libyan crisis on the collection and compliance department, in addition to investing in the hotel business and the digital transformation in the Libyan Social Security Fund in terms of challenges and achievements.

It is worth mentioning that the Libyan Social Security Fund has won the ISSA Good Practice Award in the area of social protection systems in 2017.



A team from the "Free Field Foundation" -a Libyan NGO- in cooperation with the Scouts Movement of Tripoli branch has organized awareness-raising activities on Landmines and remnants of war for families and children in IDP shelters, getting ready to go home, after expelling Haftar's militias out of Tripoli.

The IDPs were educated on the risks of land mines and remnants of war and how to proceed in case of coming into an explosive or a suspicious object.

The activities varied between games and drawing, in addition to other ideas aimed at bringing a new spirit of optimism, joy, and happiness to the displaced, and to their children in particular.



Turkish NGO starts campaign to aid 800,000 people in Libya including migrants

The Turkish NGO Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) has launched a campaign to collect aid for more than 800 thousand people in Libya, including migrants and refugees.

IHH explained in a statement that many in Libya are struggling to meet their basic needs, the most important of which is food, due to the ongoing conflicts.

The aid to be sent to Libya includes food items, clothes, hygiene, and sterilization kits, according to Anadolu news agency.

weather



Tripoli Weather Forecast

Fri 26	35°/24°		Sunny	0%	E 21 km/h
Sat 27	36°/23°		Sunny	0%	E 25 km/h
Sun 28	34°/22°		Sunny	0%	E 25 km/h
Mon 29	34°/23°		Sunny	0%	ENE 21 km/h
Tue 30	33°/23°		Sunny	0%	NE 18 km/h
Wed 01	33°/23°		Sunny	0%	NNE 18 km/h
Thu 02	33°/24°		Sunny	0%	NE 17 km/h

Photo of the Week



Features



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 a.k.a 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 sticks 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 lifestyle 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".

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