

Politics

Source: Sudan's Hemetti to send more troops to Libya to save Haftar from collapse in Tripoli



The United Arab Emirates has requested the commander of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of Sudan, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, to send military reinforcement to Libya to back warlord Khalifa Haftar's offensive on Tripoli.

According to a well-informed source, Dagalo, aka Hemetti, agreed to send two armed factions to the north African country, within the efforts of the United Arab Emirates to save its hand in Libya, Khalifa Haftar.

The source, who spoke to The Libya Observer on condition of anonymity, said that the United Arab Emirates promised to send financial and military support to Hemetti in return for dispatching his forces to Libya.

Thousands of Sudanese mercenaries are currently fighting in several fronts in Libya with many have been killed. The mercenaries are sharing their photos and videos on Facebook from Sirte and southern Tripoli fronts claiming "We are here to free Libya from terrorism."

Sudan has denied the participation of any Sudanese forces in the ongoing fighting in Libya.

Sudan's Radio Dabanga reported in July 2019 that Hemetti had sent around 4,000 RSF troops to Libya to protect oil installations in the oil crescent region in order to allow forces loyal to warlord Khalifa Haftar to concentrate all their power on the Tripoli attack.

Also in the same month, Aljazeera disclosed documents that prove Sudan had used its airspace to transport hundreds of mercenaries recruited by Hemetti to Libya.

The United Nations Panel of Experts on Sudan reported early this year that Darfur fighters are fighting for Khalifa Haftar's forces in Libya as mercenaries as they aim to strengthen their military might by earning money and weapons through Libya.

The involvement of the United Arab Emirates in Libya and Sudan's affairs has deepened with the recruitment of Sudanese nationals as mercenaries fighting in Libya and Yemen.

An Emirati firm called Black Shield has entrapped hundreds of Sudanese nationals by offering jobs in the UAE as security guards for hospitals and malls, but finally they ended up fighting in Libya.

Politics

Haftar rejects political solutions and declares himself rightful leader of Libya



Warlord Khalifa Haftar has declared the UN-brokered Libyan Political Agreement, signed in Skhirat, Morocco in 2015, invalid and that all political bodies emanated from it as no longer legitimate.

In a televised address, Haftar announced his acceptance of what he called the 'popular mandate' to assume leadership of the next stage in Libya, a clear coup against the House of Representatives and the government of Abdullah Al-Thani in east Libya.

Both political bodies are strong backers of Haftar.

This announcement comes merely three days after he publicly requested his followers to not only support him, but also authorize him to take charge and cease seeking any political solution.

He declared this as his intention, despite a proposal for a political solution to move forward, by the Speaker of the House of Representatives in Tobruk.

Politics

Mauritanian Foreign Minister most likely candidate to succeed Salame



The 'Africa Intelligence' website quoted the Secretary -General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres on Sunday, as saying that the current Foreign Minister of Mauritania, Ismael Ould Cheikh Ahmed, could be his potential candidate to head the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

The French run, 'Africa Intelligence' website said that Ould Cheikh Ahmed tops a very long list of potential candidates who have been put forward by various nations.

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Politics

Five men busted in Malta for sneaking "private contractors" in and out of Libya



A Maltese arms dealer and four other accomplices have been charged with breaching EU sanctions on Libya, according to Times of Malta newspaper.

The newspaper said Maltese national, James Fenech, had used two military-grade Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) to circumvent international sanctions and transport private contractors out of Libya without notifying the authorities.

Therefore on Friday, the five Maltese men, including Fenech, who are believed to have manned the two boats, were all charged in court in Valletta with sanctions busting.

According to the prosecution, Fenech had entered into a contractual agreement with a United Arab Emirates company to shuttle personnel in and out of Libya, which was allegedly done without consent from the relevant authorities."

"A mysterious Malta-registered boat found in the harbour or Zwetina, Libya, some 150 kilometres south of Benghazi, last August had raised suspicion that it was being used to sneak people in and out of the country, prompting the Libyan authorities to launch an investigation." Times of Malta revealed.

The report said that at the time, Libyan news sites had wrongly reported that the boat belonged to the Armed Forces of Malta, while some sections of the Libya press had speculated that it could have been used to ferry special forces or intelligence teams into the region.

Meanwhile, Times of Malta added that it was informed that investigators believed the incident was more likely linked to private military contractors who were believed to have been monitoring a shipment of weapons into Libya. While Fenech insisted that the contract was for "emergency evacuation".

Investigators established that the boats belonged to Standard Charters, a vessel chartering company based in Malta, which forms part of a web of companies held under the umbrella of Unified Global Services Group, owned by Fenech, whose company "Fieldsports Ltd" is an arms dealing firm that supplies military and tactical equipment to the highest bidder.

According to the newspaper, Fenech's company had once partnered with infamous former US private militia operator Erik Prince, in a venture that was reportedly set to produce and sell ammunition.

"A 2007 report by the European Parliament had found that Malta had, at the time, been the operational base for Prince's private militia company, formerly known as Blackwater." The newspaper added.

Politics

Western and central regions are military operations zones, Volcano of Rage command reiterates

The Volcano of Rage Operations Room has renewed its declaration of the western and central regions as military operations zones, prohibiting all military and paramilitary movement, also the driving of fuel tankers or cargo trucks, without prior official notice.

The Operations Room advised all drivers wishing to pass through these regions to communicate with the Government of National Accord and inform them of any related activities they may have planned, for security reasons.

These requirements were set in place in light of an emergency law passed by the Supreme Commander of the Libyan Army, Fayaz Al-Sarraj, whereby he stressed the need for strict coordination with the official authorities regarding the delivery of emergency medical supplies and equipment, in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic



PC extends the ban on civil aviation

Politics



The Head of the Presidential Council (PC), Fayeze Al-Sarraj, in a letter to the Minister of Transport, Milad Maatuq, announced an extension of the ban on civil aviation at all Libyan airports, for a further 15 days.

Also in the letter to Maatuq, certain individuals and groups were excluded from the ban, namely, wounded or critically ill individuals requiring urgent medical treatment abroad, essential official government delegations and commercial cargo flights.

According to the letter, Al-Sarraj pointed out that this decision is to take effect from Saturday, April 25 for a period of 15 days, adding that it was set in motion, as yet another measure in tackling the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic.



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Economy

Ministry of Finance transfers permission to the CBL for the April wage



The Ministry of Finance announced that it has forwarded to the Department of Banking Operations at the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) permission for payment of salaries for the month of April to all institutions funded by the public treasury. According to a statement by the ministry on Sunday, this step would be followed by the procedures implemented by the CBL. It was also mentioned in the statement by the Ministry of Finance, that the decision of the Presidential Council to reduce the salaries of certain institutions in the country by 20% will come into effect from April this year.

Economy

Tunisia announces the launch of a commercial line linking Sfax and Tripoli ports



The Tunisian Ministry of Transport announced the launch of a new shipping line between Sfax and Tripoli ports, subsequent to a shipment being loaded in Sfax, with 300 containers, heading for Tripoli Port.

The ministry explained that they hoped this new export line would become a regular feature between both countries, adding that a similar shipment was due to depart from Sfax, heading for Tripoli port, on May 4.

It also indicated that the establishment of this commercial line would help support further efforts, not only by Tunisia, but other potential foreign exporters, to secure business and promote the export of their merchandise, particularly at this crucial time of border restrictions, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Economy

GECOL official calls for converting landfill to a power plant



The head of the automatic control system at the South Tripoli Gas Power Station, Eng. Abdul Sattar Al-Nayli, has called on the authorities to consider converting the nearby landfill facility to a power plant to boost electricity generation.

In a video statement uploaded on the General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) Facebook page, Al-Nayli said "We could build a new power plant on the landfill's ground with an output capacity of 2,000 megawatts, which will be a great strategic project".

He insisted that the site possesses the appropriate location and space, as its vast area is estimated at 10 hectares, in addition, its proximity to the hydrocarbon warehouses and the distribution stations.

The landfill site is located next to the power station and the burning of trash is causing great harm to the station. Last February the smoke and ash of trash fire resulted in the blocking of the air filters and brought operations at the station to ground.

Economy

HoR in Tripoli reduces members' salaries



The House of Representatives (HoR), in Tripoli has decided to reduce the salaries of its members and all associated parties, in accordance with its decision: No. (10) for the year 2020.

This decision was published by the Ministry of Finance in the Government of National Accord, on Wednesday evening via its official Facebook page.

The decision stipulated that the salaries of members of the HoR and its affiliated parties, be reduced by 20% starting from May and the introduction of the decision indicated, that it was made as a result of current conditions experienced by the state and in the interest of the public in general.

Economy

Libyan Central Bank governor urges for unity to curb economic challenges



The governor of the Libyan Central Bank Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir has urged for uniting efforts of all state institutions to get past the extraordinary crisis the country is going through amid the offensive against Tripoli and the blockade on oil production and exports, let alone the global drop of oil prices.

Governor Al-Kabir's remarks came in a briefing Thursday to the planning, financial, and budget committee as well as economic, trade, and investment committee of the House of Representatives in Tripoli in the presence of HoR Speaker Hamouda Sayala and other members.

The briefing touched upon technical issues for the work of the Central Bank and concluded by forming a joint commission from the two HoR committees to review economic challenges and propose solutions.

Opinions

Operation Irini and the Mediterranean Theater of Avoidance

By Pamela Kerpius and Nick O'Connell



COVID-19 has forced a reckoning for citizens of countries rarely confronted with death at regular intervals and at such a large scale. But for Libya the presence of death is nothing new, and with the European Union's latest Mediterranean mission in place meant to curb the region's conflict, Operation Irini, it is all but certain to be exacerbated.

Irini is branded and launched to enforce the existing UN-mandated arms embargo on Libya, a would-be peace mission (Irini means "peace" in Greek) to block the trade of weapons to the many fighting factions, including to warlord General Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army (LNA).

Haftar's army has besieged Tripoli, the capital of the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA), led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, for over a year, and its indiscriminate attacks are well-documented and include the bombing of the country's only pandemic-equipped hospital in Tripoli just two weeks ago on April 6.

"[Libyans] know how difficult it is to lose family and friends," said Ayman, a Libyan national living in Yafran, a mountainous city south of Tripoli.

"I wished there was no war, so that those exposed to the virus could come to Libya, and live here until the pandemic died out," he said. But Libya remains one of the deadliest and most dangerous war zones in the world.

And the credibility of Operation Irini as a supporting peace-making initiative to stabilize conflict in Libya is doubtful.

Ostensibly a replacement for its predecessor, the politically unpopular Operation Sophia, the EU's now defunct anti-migrant-smuggling mission that operated along the Mediterranean Libyan coast, with varying degrees of struggle and limited success, began five years ago and ended last month on March 31, 2020.

Irini inherits its management wholesale.

The days of Sophia may be over, but its leadership, personnel, and headquarters remain intact. They've just moved under the name Irini, shifting a once-humanitarian effort into an all-out political one.

In theory, the mission was designed to "enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya," as EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Joseph Borrell has said, and to slow the violence engulfing the war torn country. Irini could destabilize the region further, however, and disproportionately cripple al-Sarraj's government, the opposite of its intended effect.

EU vessels in fact obstruct the allied route from Turkey through the eastern Mediterranean to Tripoli, where al-Sarraj's GNA awaits key arms shipments used in fortification against Haftar's offenses.

Haftar, one of the targets of the embargo meanwhile finds his arms supply less impacted, with arms stocks replenished from neighboring Egypt, where Irini has no jurisdiction, as is the case at all Northern African territorial borders.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, other key military backers of Haftar's LNA, remain unaffected as well, delivering arms not through the Mediterranean but across the Red Sea and Egypt.

Haftar's coalition is expected to suffer economic losses due to blocked oil exports in the eastern Mediterranean, but critical funding and arms supply routes remain open and unaffected by the new European mission.

It begs the question again in the EU's turbulent history of Mediterranean operations, of just what problem it intends to address with its presence: the easing of the migration flow in the name of upholding human rights on land and at sea, or a short-sighted response to the latest political caprice.

Operation Sophia failed for the persistent and insidious shifting of anti-migration themes across the EU political system, and left the lives and rights of migrants a trivial concern in its wake. So while it may be an end in name and in practice of Sophia, with Irini, the EU shows us a veritable repackaging of that mission that puts presence in the Mediterranean without ever confronting the blows to humanity it is meant to mitigate.

In this theater of avoidance, Operation Irini will ultimately succeed at an unstated mission to evade sea rescues. Its eastward zone of re-focus demands so, leaving the Central Mediterranean route, where the majority of movement takes place (including that of the people profiled in the Migrants of the Mediterranean archive), unattended.

The Central Mediterranean, in the EU's stead, is observed by the scant and overwhelmed NGO search-and-rescue ships, who will next, and with weary and ailing passengers aboard, be left to plead for a safe port now with COVID levied against them in an already ragged campaign.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR has suspended migrant relocations. And alongside the worsening conflict in the area thousands of people remain either imprisoned, confined, or on the move.

For a country like Libya, where Haftar's LNA offenses have been renewed, and where the animosity between its two factions' leaders has been brought current by refusals on either side to inhabit even the same negotiating room, it is its most powerless of citizens and migrants who are left at the mercy of its civil war.

[Follow next page](#)

Opinions

And for the EU, it is left facing the same issue of migration it has been addressing through avoidance for years. Since Italy's Mare Nostrum ended in 2014--the last mission devoted to saving lives at sea--it has been one reactive amendment to sea missions after another.

The iterations of Operation Sophia and the controversial outsourcing of the Libyan coast guard to save lives on the EU's behalf have been political knee jerks. Operation Irini, conveniently refocused away from the zone where humanity needs it most, is no exception. But as with anything political, Irini too will end. Humanity, however, will not.

Nor its migration away from a place tattered, torn and that will continue to come face-to-face with death for a period even COVID-19 can't outpace.

Credit: This article was first published by "Migrants of the Mediterranean", a humanitarian storytelling publication.

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

Al-Asalah Health Center in Darj reopens after maintenance work



Al-Asalah Health Center reopened on Thursday following the completion of maintenance work that was conducted by the National Oil Cooperation (NOC) within its sustainable development program carried out in areas near oil facilities.

A ceremony was held on this occasion with the participation of the Municipality's Mayor, Fadil Hosn, and the head of the Council of Elders of Darj, Muhammad Al-Atiri, in addition to a number of health officials in the municipality. The maintenance work commenced in late December 2019 and underwent several stages, according to the NOC's Facebook page.

The work consisted of comprehensive maintenance work to the entire building, developing the electricity and gas network, and providing modern devices and furniture.

The centre also had a new analytical laboratory installed as well as additional rooms for hospitalizing, birthing, and newborn babies, and a pharmacy, according to the NOC.

Mukhtar Abdul-Daiem, Director of the sustainable development program at the NOC expressed hope that the project will help alleviate the suffering of citizens and spare them the hassle of traveling long distances to get treatment and medical care.

Health

Food and Drug Control Center reports massive quantities of high demand medicines, says they passed expiry date



The Food and Drug Control Center has warned against the accumulation of expired medicines in a number of hospitals and health centers.

In a statement on its Facebook page, the center said its action teams have conducted inspection visits to a number of public hospitals and health facilities within municipalities of Greater Tripoli and reported large stocks of expired medicines in their stores.

"Most of the drugs found are used to treat chronic diseases and are in high demand," the center noted, questioning why these expired medications have not been disposed of, and why not dispensed to those who need them in the first place.

The center called on the competent authorities to intervene urgently in order to discard these expired drugs within pharmaceutical waste management guidelines.

It expressed concern that these products might end up in the wrong hands. Some "mean-spirited" people might falsify these products and sell them once again, in total disregard of people's lives and safety," the center stated.

Health

NCDC supports Misrata branch with PCR Bio-Rad rapid testing kit

An official at the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Misrata branch, announced that it had received a PCR Bio-Rad rapid testing device from the administration of the NCDC in Tripoli.

According to a statement by the Supreme Committee, set up to confront the Coronavirus pandemic in Misrata, the new device will be used in conjunction with another device received the previous day from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Misrata.

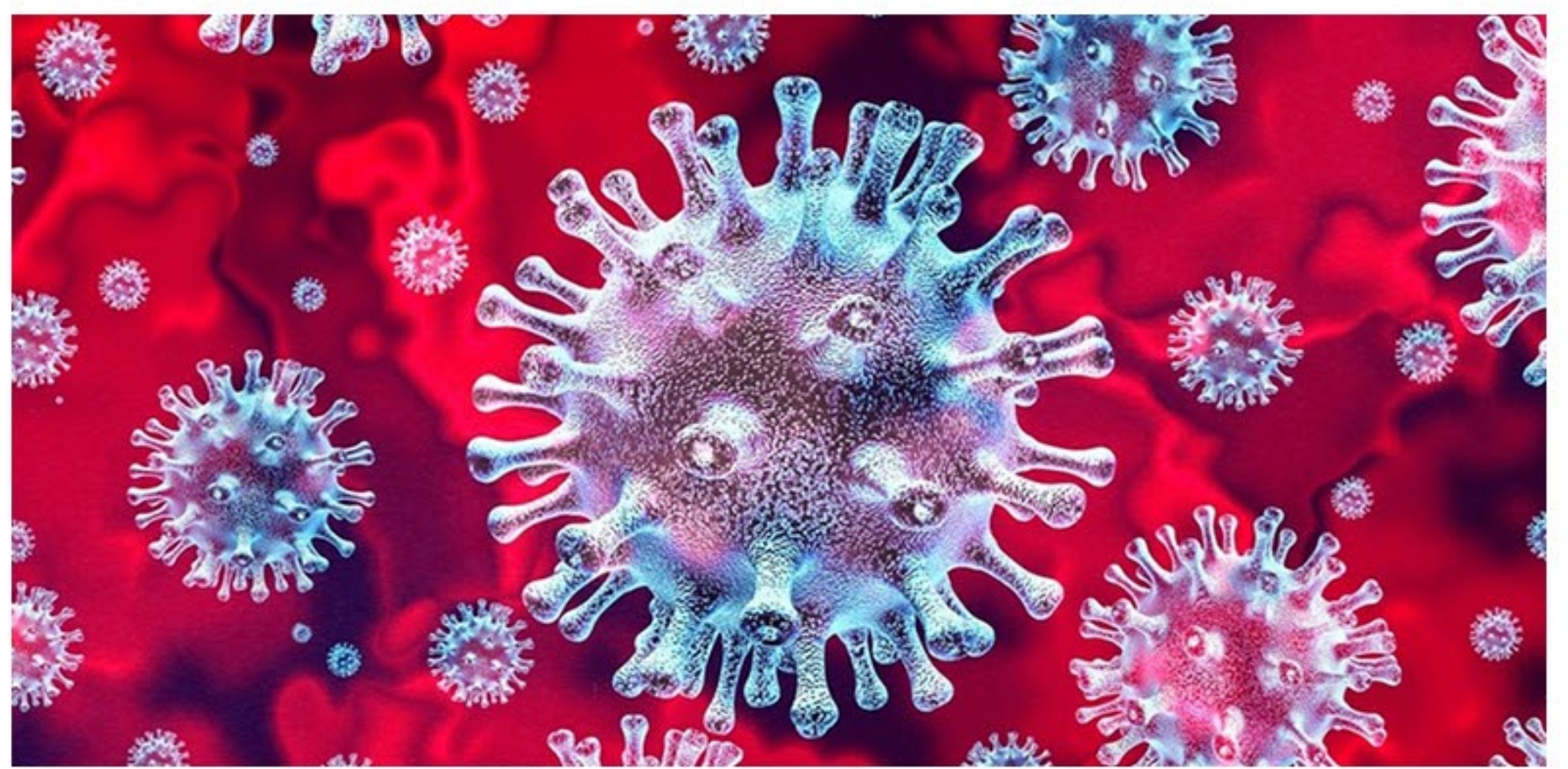
The committee indicated that it would initiate the operation of the device and it expected that testing in its branch laboratories would be in full swing by the end of this week.



المركز الوطني لمكافحة الأمراض
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL - LIBYA

Isolation site in Tazirbu suffers key equipment to deal with Covid-19

Health



Mayor of the Municipal Council of Tazirbu near Kufra district, southeastern Libya, has conducted a visit to the National Center for Disease Control of Tazirbu branch, where he toured the new isolation place set in the centre to house the coronavirus patients who will need special care.

The director of Tazirbu Hospital also joined the mayor in his inspection visit to take stock of the work accomplished and the challenges facing the medical teams.

Officials at the centre reaffirmed their readiness to receive any cases, in cooperation with the anti-Covid-19 consultative medical committee based in the city, the Municipal Council, and the Tazirbu Hospital.

However, they did point out that the isolation site suffers key equipment needed to care for Covid-19 patients, including ventilators as well as the sampling device.

Education

Working group of Education Ministry meets to form manual for medical education



The working group responsible for setting the medical education manual held its first meeting of the year via video conference system to review the proposed guide.

The manual put forward is based on three guides -Basic Medical Education Standards - Bachelor's,

Higher Education Standards - Master, Professional Development, and Training Accreditation Criteria.

The task force was formed by a decision of the Minister of Education No. (158) to form a handbook of medical education as a tool to guide students in their academic lives and provide them with knowledge and skills.

The participants explored ways to implement the manual and discussed several aspects of the text to make recommendations, including its compatibility with the standards of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

It was also agreed to hold three meetings per week, in order to be able to complete their assignment within the established time

Education

As schools move to online classes, Sabha University holds video conference on remote learning



Sabha University held on Thursday an international conference on e-learning, through online video, under the slogan "E-learning amid Covid-19, challenges, and solutions", with the participation of a number of academic institutions from nine countries.

The conference, which is the first of its kind in Libya, discussed challenges facing the educational institutions as many schools in Libya and elsewhere, move to online classes due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the interruption of the educational process.

The participants exchanged experiences and explored ways to optimize on-line learning, with the view to come up with a standard formula that can be applied.

The head of the scientific committee of the e-learning conference, Hassan Abu Hamoud said their aim was to bring together academics and specialists in this field to develop effective legislation and controls for remote learning, to ensure that school educational standards are sustained.

Life



Missing girl from Msallata found safe, reunited with family

A girl from Msallata city who was the focus of Libyan social media upon her disappearance a few days ago has been found safe, Msallata Security Directorate said reported.

The eight-year-old Salam Mustafa Suwaidan is the daughter of the doctor heading the Covid-19 crisis committee at Msallata Hospital.

The security directorate launched an extensive search operation upon her disappearance last Tuesday.

The girl went to a nearby shop to buy some sweets but did not return to her home, according to local sources. Later, images of Salam caught from a surveillance camera at a local store were circulated on social platforms to help in the searching operations.

"She is the daughter of every father and mother and the sister of every child", doctors and staff of Msallata Hospital said in an organized stand they held to show their solidarity with her family.

The girl was reunited with her family and received a surprise visit by officers from the security directorate, which they documented and uploaded on their official page.

The circumstances surrounding her disappearance remained unclear as the security directorate did not give full details.

Life

Charitable organization in Zliten launches Ramadan campaign to help migrants



The charitable organization Basmat Shabab for Development and Voluntary Work from Zliten has announced the launch of its Ramadan campaign for the current year, under the slogan "Iftar with Basmat is different".

The campaign will provide food baskets and Iftar meals to support migrant workers and their families during Ramadan.

Many migrant workers are struggling to survive with their limited means in light of the lockdown policy implemented by the government to combat the spread of Covid-19.

The organizers say they hope their campaign will help ease these circumstances and bring some cheer to the migrants in this blessed month.

The charity called on people to practice compassion and kindness in this holy month and support their campaign so that it can reach well its target to around 3,500 migrants inside the city.

Zliten municipality pointed out that these initiatives come to alleviate the suffering of migrants in view of the current circumstances, whether related to Ramadhan or the coronavirus pandemic.

weather

TRIPOLI WEATHER FORECAST



DAY		DESCRIPTION	HIGH / LOW	PRECIP	WIND	HUMIDITY
FRI MAY 1		Partly Cloudy	81°/62°	0%	NE 8 mph	43%
SAT MAY 2		Partly Cloudy	78°/62°	0%	NE 9 mph	49%
SUN MAY 3		Sunny	79°/63°	0%	NW 9 mph	50%
MON MAY 4		Sunny	78°/62°	0%	NNW 9 mph	54%
TUE MAY 5		Sunny	83°/67°	0%	E 13 mph	47%
WED MAY 6		Sunny	82°/66°	0%	NE 12 mph	46%
THU MAY 7		Sunny	82°/68°	0%	ENE 11 mph	47%

Photo of the Week



Features



A typical Ramadan day in Libya

Ramadan is one of the five Pillars of Islam. It is the month of fastening for Muslims worldwide. The month lasts for 29 to 30 days based on the Islamic calendar, which depends on the moon movement. Each year, the people of Libya receive the month with great passion and joy, they get ready for it as if waiting for a special guest; thereby Ramadan is commonly named the Guest.

Getting ready for Ramadan comes on official and popular fronts, school, work and even TV programs, all schedules their work and fix their plans to meet with Ramadan's requirements.

Preparation starts ahead of time and at all levels. Mosques are maintained and lamps are lit on the minarets and fences of the building to receive the pioneers and worshippers who inhabit the mosques throughout this blessed month.

People in this month are more engaged in reading the Holy Quran and attending religious lessons and sermons, besides participating the Taraweeh and Tahajud night prayer, where mosques are crowded with worshippers of men, women and children in an immense passion scene, which characterizes this month.

In Ramadan, women usually like to make changes in their kitchen and acquire new kitchen utensils and dishes to present food for the family after a long fastening day, in the best possible way.

The Libyan Ramadan dinner table is rich in various foods from which shared with other Arab and Islamic tables consisting of dates, milk, fruit juices, meat, rice and other nuts and sweets, but still the Libyan traditional soup always center's the stage. However, public awareness campaigns on food waste reduction and its impact at all levels are intensified in this month through different means including media, to educate the public.

Exchanging food between neighbours at sunset (breaking fasting time) is one of the very fine Libyan traditions and customs in Ramadan, besides other Various manifestations which are truly admirable, including Collective eating in the street Prepared by citizens or charitable organizations, and breaking fasting together with neighbours in the mosque where everyone is keen on bringing anything with him on Maghrib prayer however simple it was, perhaps dates or a carton of milk, to share with others in the Mosque or to present it to those who were on the road and couldn't make it at home in time, and in exchange people try to show the better of them and throw all their sinful behaviour that contradict to the spirit of Ramadan and Islamic principles and which may negate the reward of fasting.

During this difficult, transitional period of the country, Libyans look to these Islamic values of life that are revived in Ramadan to have their impact in promoting stability, peace and harmony within Libyan society.

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