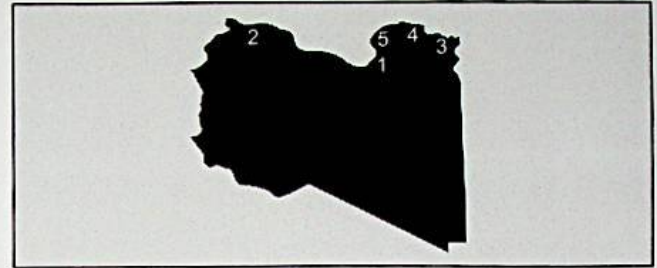


Summary: Clashes break out between pro-government militiamen and "Cyrenaica Regional Government" militiamen in Ajdabiya; Artillery attack targets Tripoli International Airport runway; Italian engineer kidnapped in Tobruk; Attacks against state symbols in eastern Libya continue unabated



Clashes Break Out Between Pro-Government Militiamen and "Cyrenaica Regional Government" Militiamen in Ajdabiya(1)

Clashes broke out between pro-government militiamen and "Cyrenaica Regional Government" militiamen in Ajdabiya over the weekend. The fighting began after the pro-government militiamen deployed to the Haniya military base in the city on the orders of Petroleum Facilities Guard commander Idriss Bukhamada. The move was interpreted as a bid to increase pressure on the "Cyrenaica Regional Government" to end its occupation of eastern Libya's oil terminals, as Ajdabiya is the base of its leader Ibrahim al-Jathran. Reports indicate the violence left at least 16 people injured. Sources suggest that the clashes ended in a stalemate, with the "Cyrenaica Regional Government" militiamen failing to eject the pro-government militiamen from the Haniya military base. The presence of the pro-government militiamen in Ajdabiya—coupled with recent international actions against "Cyrenaica Regional Government" efforts to independently export oil—will strengthen the Libyan government's hand in its dispute with the federalist group.

Based on media reports in: al-Manara, al-Watan al-Libiyya, Libya al-Mustakbal, Libya Herald, Quryna al-Jadeeda

Artillery Attack Targets Tripoli(2) International Airport Runway

Unknown assailants launched two artillery rounds at the Tripoli International Airport's main runway on 21 March. The attack caused substantial material damage and forced a temporary cancellation of all flights at the airport. A repair team managed to fix the damaged runway within hours, and some regional airlines resumed flights shortly thereafter. However, most European airlines—including Alitalia—are waiting a few more days to assess the situation before resuming flights. The exact motive behind the attack remains unclear, but rumors are spreading that it may have been carried out in an attempt to undermine the Zintani militiamen tasked with guarding the airport.

Based on media reports in: al-Watan al-Libiyya, Libya al-Mustakbal, Libya Herald, Quryna al-Jadeeda

Italian Engineer Kidnapped in Tobruk(3)

An unknown group kidnapped an Italian engineer in Tobruk on 22 March. Reports indicate the engineer was in the eastern city working on an infrastructure project for Enrico Ravanelli S.p.A. According to the Italian Foreign Ministry, a criminal group is likely behind the abduction rather than extremist Islamists. The Italian Foreign Ministry also announced that the kidnapped engineer is a diabetic whose life may be in danger unless he has access to insulin. The incident marks the second occasion in recent months that an Italian citizen working in eastern Libya has been kidnapped. In January, unknown gunmen rumored to be members of a tribe upset with a business arrangement abducted two Italian construction workers near Derna(4).

Based on media reports in: Libya al-Mustakbal, Libya Herald