

# Libya delays list of presidential election candidates

Author:

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TRIPOLI: Libya's election commission on Saturday delayed publication of a final list of candidates for a presidential election scheduled in less than two weeks.

It is just the latest twist in a UN-led effort targeting December 24 presidential polls intended to help the oil-rich North African country move past a decade of violence.

The process has been undermined by bitter divisions over the legal basis for the elections, their dates, and who should be allowed to run, with a string of controversial figures stepping forward.

Publication of the final candidate list is supposed to mark the formal start of the election campaign, but the election commission did not give a new date for issuing the list.

Rules governing the ballot – which would be the first time a Libyan head of state is chosen by universal suffrage – say the commission should publish the list of candidates two weeks after final court rulings and appeals related to candidacies.

On Dec. 2 a Libyan court reinstated Seif Al-Islam Qaddafi, a son of slain dictator Muammar Qaddafi, as a candidate.

## **HIGHLIGHT**

**Libya descended into chaos with the NATO-backed 2011 revolt that overthrew and killed Muammar Qaddafi.**

A day earlier, an appeals court in Tripoli rejected petitions against the candidacy of interim Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah, who heads the Tripoli-based unity government established in March and charged with leading the country to presidential and legislative elections.

Libya descended into chaos with the NATO-backed 2011 revolt that overthrew and killed Muammar Qaddafi. A year of relative peace followed an October 2020 ceasefire between warring eastern and western camps, but analysts have warned that violence could easily flare again surrounding the elections.

A statement on the election commission's website said it must still adopt a series of judicial and legal measures "before proceeding to the publication of the definitive list of candidates and the start of their electoral campaign."

It added that success of the electoral process cannot be borne solely by the elections commission "since the results will cast a shadow over the present and future of the country."

The commission added that it is being careful not to limit its role to implementing the law, but ensuring that its functions extend to "correct

interpretation of the law.”



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Libyan political body calls for election delay as disputes grow UN chief names US diplomat to run Libya mediation

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## [Illegal organ transplant network busted in Istanbul](#)

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Sun, 2021-12-12 00:54

ANKARA: A wide-ranging organ trade network led by Jordanian and Palestinian nationals in Istanbul has been busted by the Turkish authorities. Ten people, four ringleaders and six individuals who were about to sell their organs or get transplants, were caught and four were immediately imprisoned. The network was running the business using forged documents at a hospital in Beylikduzu, on the European side of Istanbul, in exchange for \$50,000 per case.

The case came to light when Turkish doctors reported to the police department that combats migrant smuggling that the patient and the organ donor didn't seem be relatives and had very poor communication.

The authorities turned to the Palestinian Consulate, which denied having provided such documents of kinship to the people caught.

Turkish police exposed the network by investigating hospital records and monitoring hotel locations near the hospital where illegal organ transplants were being carried out. The operation involved two raids at the hotel.

The ringleader, Hasan B., found the organ donors and receivers through his social media connections. Another person, Hasan Abu Z., welcomed people to Turkey and introduced the organ receivers to the physician, Ali Y.M., with the help of a middleman, Ahmad M. These four members of the network were arrested.

The network named their illegal trade "VIP Service from the hotel to the hospital," eyeing clients from Arab countries while looking for people who could sell their organs. The blood groups of people in need of kidneys were also exposed in social media posts.

The network forged kinship and birth certificates to make them look as if they were from the foreign consulates.

Money and fake documents were confiscated during the operation. Out of the \$50,000, \$10,000 was given to the organ donor and \$15,000 to the private hospital. The network made \$25,000 on each case.

Six people who were kept by the network in a hotel in Istanbul were released on condition of judicial control. The patients were Jordanian and Palestinian nationals.

Unregulated organ trafficking and illegal transplant have shown a shocking trend in the region for a while. Last year, several Syrian refugees were found to be selling their organs on the black market out of desperation to survive financially.

Social media platforms, especially Facebook, were used extensively by organ brokers for illegal operations offering money to desperate refugees who would sell their livers or kidneys. However, the donors were only paid half the agreed price and usually left without care after the operation.

It is illegal to sell and buy human organs in Turkey. Any person who removes an organ from another person without his/her legal consent and any person who buys or sells an organ or acts as an intermediary for such activities faces a jail sentence of five to nine years, while those who make an announcement or engage in commercial advertising to secure organs can be imprisoned for up to one year.

For the operation to take place legally, the organ donor has to prove that he is a relative of the recipient. However, the trafficking networks prepare counterfeit documents to bypass Turkish laws.

Under the 2018 Declaration of Istanbul on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism, international organizations issued guidelines for health officials and policymakers, noting that "trafficking in human organs and trafficking in persons for organ removal should be prohibited and criminalized."



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## [Sudan's military must rebuild trust with opponents, says UN envoy](#)

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Sun, 2021-12-12 00:53

NEW YORK: Sudan's military must rebuild trust with the opposition, especially the young generation who feel betrayed by its seizure of power in an Oct. 25 coup that sparked the greatest crisis in the country's political transition, the UN special envoy for Sudan said Friday.

Volker Perthes told the UN Security Council that "immediate confidence building measures and a visible commitment to bring the country back on a democratic transition path will be key." He said Sudan will also have to take

“demonstrable steps” for the international community to restore financial, economic and political support.

“This crisis is not over yet, but discussions on a way forward have begun,” he said.

The military takeover upended a fragile planned transition to democratic rule more than two years after a popular uprising forced the removal of longtime autocrat Omar Bashir and his government.

Gen. Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, who now heads the ruling body, and other military leaders dissolved the transitional government and arrested dozens of officials and politicians.

Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok was reinstated last month amid international pressure in a deal that calls for an independent technocratic Cabinet under military oversight led by him. The agreement included the release of government officials and politicians detained since the coup.

The Nov. 21 deal, however, was rejected by the pro-democracy movement, which insists power be handed over to a civilian government to lead the transition. Their protests, which saw thousands of Sudanese back on the streets in Khartoum and other cities on Monday, follow the slogan: “No negotiations, no compromise, no power-sharing” with the military.

Perthes said he cautiously welcomed the Nov. 21 agreement though it is “far from perfect.” But he said it can help avoid more bloodshed and provide a step toward dialogue and return to constitutional order. At least 44 people were killed and hundreds injured in protests triggered by the coup, which Perthes blamed on “excessive use of force by security forces.”

“This has deepened the crisis and mobilized the so-called ‘street,’ which continues to organize regular mass demonstrations,” he said. “Many feel betrayed by the coup, and now reject any negotiations or partnership with the military.”

Perthes said the UN political mission in Sudan is prepared to facilitate a dialogue to address unresolved issues for the transitional period as well as broader questions for a new constitution.

He said progress in bridging the divide can be measured by a small number of short-term and medium-term indicators.

“For the immediate term, the main indicator has been the release of all political detainees, cease of arbitrary arrests, and the guarantee of the right to peaceful protest and assembly,” Perthes said.

“Almost all civilians arrested since the coup have been released, which is a welcome step.”

But he said arbitrary arrests are reportedly continuing, especially during demonstrations.

Military and political leaders have promised to investigate the use of deadly violence against demonstrators, Perthes said accountability for human rights violations since the coup will be seen “as a critical indicator for progress, and could help to rebuild confidence.”

The UN envoy said three other important short-term indicators should also be watched: The ability of the prime minister to freely form a Cabinet of technocrats, the lifting of the state of emergency declared Oct. 25, and the restoration of freedom of the press.

Over the next few months, Perthes said, “the main indicator for a return to a democratic transition path will be the restoration of political space” that is particularly important ahead of elections in July 2023 when power is

to be handed over to an elected civilian government. He said elections may even be held earlier than planned.



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Sudan cut off from \$650 million of international funding after coup

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## [Illegal but essential, migrants recycle Istanbul's waste](#)

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ISTANBUL: Shrouded by acrid smoke, a young Afghan crouches sorting waste he has pulled from the trash bins of Istanbul, anxious that Turkey will soon strip him of even this subsistence.

"I start at eight in the morning and finish at eight at night," said Issam Raffur, who has spent four of his 20 years in Turkey.

"It is very hard and poorly paid, but I have no choice," he shrugged, smoke billowing from a fire barely warming his makeshift sorting center on a soggy winter day.

Considered the poorest of Turkey's poor, Afghans have joined Kurds, the Laz, Roma and other ethnic minorities and undocumented migrants in doing work others snub.

For less than \$10 a day, they roam the streets of Istanbul, a megalopolis of nearly 16 million people straining under the weight of a currency crisis and a flood of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and other conflict-riven states. Diving headfirst into dumpsters, they dig up plastic bottles, glass and other waste they then sort and sell in bulk – a self-organized, unregulated business that keeps the city clean, and men such as Issam fed.

But as public sentiment turns against migrants and other foreigners in Turkey, the state-appointed prefecture of Istanbul has declared this work bad for "the environment and public health."

Issam and his friends suspect that what Turkish officials really want is to put this potentially profitable business under the control of a few, well-connected recycling firms.

"If the big companies take over, they will saw off our last branch of support," said Mahmut Aytar, a Turk who manages one of the small recycling centers on the Asian side of Istanbul. "They will throw us in the ravine." Speaking to AFP, Deputy Environment Minister Mehmet Emin Birpinar did little to ease Aytar's concerns.

"Waste can be bought and sold, so we have started to view it as a raw material with other uses," he said. "After the price of raw materials increased, the value of recycled goods has risen."

Born in multi-ethnic southeastern Turkey, Aytar, 28, launched his recycling business out of desperation after failing to find work befitting his biology degree.

"This job does not require experience or training. Anyone can do it, but it is mostly the people excluded by the system who get involved," he said while watching his press machines crush plastic bags and empty bottles.

After being shrunk into tidy bales, the plastic waste is loaded onto trucks of small, independently run recycling operators who convert them into granules.

Aytar said he runs one of 2,500 or so impromptu recycling depots in Istanbul, receiving dozens of trash collectors – called "cekcekci" and roughly translating as those who pull carts – every day.

Tugging white, muddied carts filled with paper, cardboard, plastic and bottles, they dart between honking cars and pedestrian streams, earning 80-120 liras (\$6-\$9) a day.

Women and minors specialize in cardboard boxes, which they find after the shops close at night, their babies sometimes riding along in the carts' lower folds.

Each kilogram of waste is worth about a lira (7 US cents), and the bravest collect about 150 kg of waste a day. "They probably don't realize it, but by being impoverished, they contribute to protecting the environment," said Aytar. "They are helping society."

They do so while living in destitution and depend on the whims of the police.

In early October, security forces rounded up more than 250 cekcekci in one day, releasing them after a few hours but keeping their precious cargoes of waste.

“It’s harassment,” said Elrem Yasar, who started managing his own depot after collecting trash for 12 years.

“Each confiscation costs me about 560 liras, which I earn in three days.” Istanbul prefecture officials defended their crackdown.

“These cekcekci work illegally,” one official told AFP on condition of anonymity. “It is up to the city to take care of recycling and to collect revenues from it.”



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## [Egypt, UAE education ministries sign cooperation agreement](#)

Author:

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CAIRO: The education ministries of Egypt and the UAE have signed a cooperation agreement in the field of higher education and scientific research.

Egypt's Higher Education Minister Khaled Abdel Ghaffar said the agreement involves exchanging experiences, scholarships, information and faculty visits, holding regular forums, and joint marketing of study programs between the two countries.

Emirati Education Minister Hussain Al-Hammadi said the agreement contributes to both countries' development, the consolidation of bilateral relations, and a future based on creativity and innovation.



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