

## **Libya Ceasefire Agreement**

### **Why in news?**

Rival parties in Libya announced a historic ceasefire.

### **What happened?**

- This was followed by the 5+5 Libyan Joint Military Commission (JMC) talks in Geneva.
- This will give way to the possibility that the long-drawn conflict might be coming to an end.
- This is the first, crucial, brave step towards a comprehensive settlement of the long Libyan crisis.

### **What is going on in Libya?**

- Libya has been embroiled in a tussle for power between rival militias ever since Muammar Gaddafi was ousted from power by NATO-backed forces in October 2011.
- Gaddafi's death marked the end of 42-year rule by the former Army officer which was in power since 1969.
- In the wake of Gaddafi's ouster, dozens of militias led by multiple warlords scrambled to occupy the power vacuum.
- As a result, Libya turned into a war zone with different militant leaders claiming control of the North African nation.
- Some of the issues of dispute among the warring factions include control of the oil infrastructure, governance, national finances and the military.

### **Are other countries involved?**

- The UN-backed internationally recognised government called the Government of National Accord (GNA) is led by Fayez al-Sarraj.
- The GNA took power in 2015 under the UN-brokered Libyan Political Agreement.
- This Tripoli-based government is supported by allies Qatar and Turkey.
- Turkey has sent troops to Libya, which includes Syrian rebel fighters who are aligned with Turkey.
- Turkey maintains that it has sent these troops to help the UN-backed government in the west.

- The GNA's authority is challenged by the factions controlling the east.
- The eastern part is controlled by rebel forces under the Libyan National Army (LNA) which is supported by Russian military contractors.
- Between 2014 and 2019, the LNA has conducted military operations against the Islamic State in the east.
- The spread of the Islamic State has further complicated the situation and is also one reason the US is one of the foreign states that has intervened.

### **What has been the impact of the civil war in Libya?**

- As per the Council on Foreign Relations' Global Conflict Tracker, the civil war in Libya has created over 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers, while more than 268,000 people have been displaced.
- As per the Congressional Research Service report, since April 2019, over 2,600 Libyans including hundreds of civilians have been killed.

### **What is the new ceasefire agreement about?**

- As per this new agreement facilitated by the UN, all foreign mercenaries and armed forces will have to withdraw within the next 90 days.
- The parties also agreed that any violations in the ceasefire will be dealt by a joint military force, which will be under a unified command.
- But, the ceasefire does not apply to UN-designated terrorist groups.
- The agreement has established a Joint Police Operations room.
- This operations room will implement and propose special arrangements to secure the areas that are cleared of military units and armed groups.
- Further, the 5+5 have also agreed to open the land and air routes that connect the regions and cities of Libya.

### **What will be the impact on oil reserves?**

- Significantly, Libya has Africa's largest oil and gas reserves.
- With regards to oil production, the different parties have agreed that the commanders of the east and west petroleum facilities will work directly with a representative appointed by the National Oil Corporation.
- This representative will recommend a plan for restructuring the Petroleum Facilities Guards to ensure that the flow of oil continues.
- This is a significant development since control of the oil infrastructure is one of the elements of competition between the GNA and LNA.

**Source: The Indian Express**



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