

Loading resumes at two Libyan oil ports, NOC says

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Loading operations at the Libyan oil terminals of Es Sider and Ras Lanuf resumed on Friday, 10 September, after a one-day stoppage, National Oil Corp (NOC) said, though an engineer at a third port, Hariga, said it was still closed by protesters.



Source: kodda © [123RF.com](#)

The closures of oil ports have underscored the continued fragility of Libyan oil output, which has been about 1.3 million barrels a day this year in the face of insecurity, budget disputes and political divisions.

NOC head Mustafa Sanallah said in a statement that blockages at oil ports had been planned by one Libyan official and that another had taken part, without naming either.

Last year, eastern-based forces in the civil war blockaded almost all exports for months, ending with negotiations that came in the context of a wider push towards peace.

Earlier this year, NOC declared force majeure on some exports after its subsidiaries said they were unable to continue operating because of a lack of funding through the budget. The eastern-based parliament has repeatedly rejected the budget plans of the interim unity government, which was installed in March as part of a US-backed peace push.



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Friction between oil minister, NOC chief

Meanwhile, there has been friction between the unity government's oil minister, Mohamed Oun, and NOC chief Sanallah.

Oun has said he is suspending Sanallah because he left Libya without seeking permission from the ministry. Sanallah has rejected that, saying only the cabinet has the power to suspend him.

"We will never be satisfied with the politicisation of NOC, and it being used as a bargaining chip by some politicians and influential people to achieve non-national interests and agendas," Sanallah said, without specifying who he referred to.

The people who shut down exports at Es Sider and Ras Lanuf demanded jobs and the dismissal of Sanallah. Those at Hariga demanded jobs. A group at Sharara oil field has also threatened to stop output unless Sanallah is dismissed.

All those areas are held by the eastern-based forces of commander Khalifa Haftar.

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