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Over Million People so Far Registered to Vote

Tripoli- By Wednesday 9 May and nine days since the opening for vote registration in Libya over one million have been registered throughout the country.

To mark such achievement, the Chairman of the Higher National

Elections Commission (HNEC) and the staff at the Commission held a small celebration.

During the celebration the attendants sang the national anthem and read verses of the holy Quran as blessing for the martyrs who made all that

freedom possible by revolting against the brutal dictator and dying for their homeland.

The number of registered Libyans so far is about 20 percent of the whole population of 5.5 million according to the latest

consensus of three years ago.

The number is expected to rise in the coming days as Libyans rush to registration offices.

The deadline for registration was first set to be 14 May and then was extended last week for seven

more days.

Interim government spokesman Naser al-Mania told the media Thursday: "Up until now, 25 percent of electors have registered to vote, but we are confident

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EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton is seen here with Libyan uprising leaders during a visit to Revolution Square in Benghazi, 22 May 2011.

First Civilian Trial of Gaddafi Supporters Held in Zawia

Libya began its first civilian trial of alleged supporters of Gaddafi's regime on Tuesday, officials said, as five men accused of planning to create instability by "terrorist acts" appeared in the dock.

According to court officials who were quoted by Reuters, a number of the accused have already confessed about taking part in fighting battles aimed at disturbing the peace in the country.

Judge Amer al-Turki did not read out a charge sheet but adjourned the trial, which is being held in Zawia, for a week at the request of defense lawyers.

Ali Ashaab Mohammed, the head of the court, said the men had been arrested in Zawia, 40 kilometers west of Tripoli.

"Today's case ... is about a group of former regime loyalists ... They were planning to conduct terrorist acts and create instability in the country, as well as carrying weapons," he said outside the courtroom.

"Some of them confessed that they took part in fighting battles in some areas."

The men were behind bars in the courtroom. Officials said these were the first such civil court proceedings since the end of last year's war. "This is the first trial (of suspected Gaddafi supporters)," Mohammed said.

In February, a group of Libyans accused of fighting for Gaddafi went on trial before a military court in the eastern city of Benghazi. The court later ruled they should be tried instead in a civilian court.

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EU Awards €10M Contract to Private Security Company in Libya

The European External Action Service (EEAS) has awarded a contract to British security firm G4S in Libya despite the fact it has no permission to work there.

G4S works for the Israeli government, providing what it calls "security systems maintenance" for the SJ District police station and for the Ofer

prison in the occupied West Bank.

The Ofer prison is currently in the headlines because of a mass hunger strike by Palestinian detainees who are being held without trial, making G4S into a potential target for Arab hostility in the region.

According to EUobserver which questioned the whole

affair, "The €10 million contract covers bodyguards and building security for the EU's Tripoli and Benghazi delegations for the next four years starting 1 June. EEAS officials also signed an end-user agreement for the company to import assault rifles and 9mm pistols for its work."

The online publication said EEAS took the steps despite the

fact G4S has no permission from the National Transitional Council (NTC), the internationally recognized post-war authority in Libya, to operate on its territory.

EEAS spokesman Michael Mann and G4S spokesman Adam Mynott confirmed the

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