



## More than 100 killed in west Libya clashes in a week

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TRIPOLI (Reuters) - More than 100 people were killed and 500 injured in a week of clashes in western Libya, a government spokesman said, the latest bout of fighting that has highlighted volatility in the North African country months after Muammar Gaddafi's ouster.

No fighting had been reported since Monday in the Western Mountains area, about 160 kms south of the capital Tripoli, he said, after the interim government, seeking to impose its authority on a fractious country, called for a ceasefire and sent in troops to restore calm.

The clashes, which began on June 11, pitted fighters from the town of Zintan, who played a big role in ousting Gaddafi, against members of the El-Mashashia tribe, who chose not to join last year's rebellion.

Resentment between the two groups spilled over into fighting in December and erupted again last week when a Zintan fighter was shot dead. Zintan's militias blamed the El-Mashashia tribe and retaliated, several members of the tribe said.

Government spokesman Nasser El-Manee told a news conference 105 people had been killed and 500 injured in the week of fighting. Doctors and ambulances had to be sent to the region to help evacuate the wounded, he said.

"There was use of both heavy and light weapons," he said. "The armed forces are now on the ground and calm has returned."

Long-standing tribal rivalries, divided communities plague Libya as the government struggles to impose order in the vast oil-producing country awash with weapons after the war.

Gaddafi's repressive rule kept in check the deep-running animosities in Libyan society, which often pit villages, cities, tribes or neighbors. When he was forced from power last year, old feuds re-surfaced.

Libya's governing National Transitional Council and its Western backers hope the violence will not jeopardize a July 7 election for a national assembly.

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