

Gift of the Givers arrive in Libya

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Gift of the Givers entered Jidabia, in Libya, on Monday night when political clashes continued, says a spokesman.



Anti-Gaddafi rebels tear a picture of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi at a checkpoint they just took over near the oil facility of Ras Lanuf. Major Libyan oil ports Ras Lanuf and Brega in the east of the country are closed as violence in the area has hampered operations at the terminals, shipping sources said.

Photograph by: REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih

In a statement, Imtiaz Sooliman said the group was on its way to Benghazi with medical equipment and medicines worth US\$50,000 to assist those in need.

A second team with more medical supplies was expected to leave South Africa on Tuesday night.

Food and blankets had been purchased for distribution to refugees at the border.

Sooliman said the Gift of the Givers would repatriate 32 refugees on commercial flights.

Earlier this year, a revolt erupted in Libya, one of Africa's biggest oil producers, against long-time leader Muammar Gaddafi.

Thousands have fled amid violent clashes between government forces and regime opponents that witnesses have described as a "civil war".

At least 1,000 people have died and there is a "humanitarian emergency" in Libya, according to the United Nations.

In February, 30 South Africans evacuated from Libya arrived home. Among them were South African embassy officials.