COVID-19 DISORDER TRACKER: SPOTLIGHT

26 APR - 2 MAY 2020
A NEW WAVE OF UNREST IN LEBANON

After a months-long lull in protest activity, a new wave of unrest has swept across Lebanon since the second half of April. Unlike the peaceful uprising of late 2019, demonstrations have turned violent this time, leaving a trail of charred cars, smashed ATMs, and burning tires in Beirut, Tripoli and Saida. As the government is unable to tackle the country’s worst-ever economic crisis, whose effects are exacerbated by the lockdown introduced on March 15, these recent riots reflect the growing mistrust towards Lebanon’s political elites, while reports of protesters manhandled by the army can further ignite popular resentment against the regime.

Growing turmoil
The number of demonstrations - both peaceful and violent - recorded in the last week of April was the highest since December.

The securitization of protests
During the last week of April, the number of events in which the army engaged with demonstrators was the highest recorded since the onset of the protests.

Widespread unrest
Demonstrations were recorded in all eight governorates in April, with nearly 50 percent of reported riots taking place in Tripoli, Saida and Greater Beirut areas.