



SOMALIA

WHAT HAPPENED?

Tensions rose as the political opposition **denounced manipulation of the Lower House of Parliament's election process**; calm returned to Galmudug State after the Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) militia's re-emergence in September; and Al-Shabaab continued attacks notably in the capital Mogadishu.

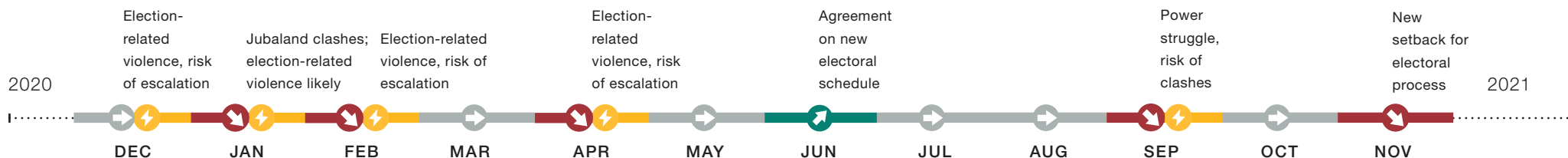
WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Ongoing elections are encountering major problems, with the opposition threatening to stop recognising the process. Without a change, the country is headed toward a **new electoral impasse** and potentially a significant crisis, **with the possibility of renewed clashes in Mogadishu**.

OCTOBER TRENDS

The indirect elections process inched forward as the power struggle between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed "Farmajo" and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble quietened. The ASWJ militia re-emerged, capturing towns in Somalia's centre, and Al-Shabaab violence continued.

TRENDS TIMELINE



1 ↘ Electoral process at risk of derailing

Lower House elections kicked off slowly on 1 November. On 11 November, the federal election committee announced a new timeline for completion of the process by 24 December, though that appears highly aspirational.

In late November, the opposition voiced concerns regarding the process's legitimacy amid reports of **significant manipulation** – the replacement of clan elders involved in candidate selection and denial of registration for certain candidates – and **interference** by federal member state presidents to boost favoured candidates.

2 ⇄ Tensions in Galmudug and Puntland states

Calm returned to Galmudug State in early November after the ASWJ militia vacated the outskirts of Guriceel town. **Wider mediation efforts** to reach an agreement between the Galmudug administration and ASWJ over the latter's status, however, **stalled** in mid-November.

Puntland President Deni on 24 November **removed the Bosasso-based commander of the Puntland Security Forces (PSF)**, who is related to a key political rival. Elements of the PSF rejected the dismissal and **rival security forces took up positions** in the port city.

3 ⇄ Al-Shabaab continued to launch deadly attacks

In Mogadishu, separate suicide attacks killed three in Wadajir district (11 November); a prominent journalist in Bondhere district (20 November) and eight in Hodan district, while destroying a nearby school (25 November). The killing by suspected Al-Shabaab militants of a traditional elder, Mohammed Hassan Nur, in Yaqshid district on 17 November raised concern over the protection of elders and delegates during elections.

Al-Shabaab also launched **two attacks in South West State's capital Baidoa** as Lower House elections began there.

WHAT TO WATCH

The reported manipulation in the Lower House elections is a major challenge. Electoral institutions appear unable to counter the alleged political interference, while the opposition might not recognise the process without changes. The dispute is likely to **further delay the timeline**, and could **spur a new crisis**.

The failure of mediation between ASWJ and Galmudug authorities may result in **further clashes**.

The PSF-related dispute in Puntland could increase tensions around Lower House elections in **Bosasso**.

