

40 Immigrants Die in Libyan Shipwreck



Libya, May 13 (RHC)-- Libyan officials say at least 40 people have lost their lives after a boat carrying 130 migrants attempting to make it to Europe capsized last week off the country's shores.

Libyan navy spokesman Ayoub Bilqassem said that the bottom of the small boat collapsed near the coastal town of al-Qarbouli, located 50 kilometers east of the capital Tripoli, causing the boat to capsize.

He also said 52 people, mostly Africans, were immediately rescued and a number of others are still missing. Porous borders with sub-Saharan neighbors as well as proximity to Italy and Malta across the Mediterranean have made Libya a common transit route for migrants trying to reach Europe.

Libyan Interior Minister Saleh Maziq has threatened to help illegal migrants reach Europe if the European Union does not do more to help his country deal with a flood of migrants using Libya as a transit point. He added that EU assistance would enable his North African nation to stop illegal migrants arriving in Libya from sub-Saharan African nations en route to Europe.

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