

Boat carrying 45 refugees capsizes off coast of Yemen

Image not found or type unknown



**Migrants are rescued from a wooden boat by the Geo Barents migrant rescue ship
The UN refugee agency said the boat capsized due to 'strong winds and overloading' [File:
Darrin Zammit Lupi/Reuters]**

Sanaa, July 26 (RHC)-- Only four survivors have been found after a boat carrying at least 45 people capsized off the coast of Yemen, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The agency announced the incident on Thursday, saying the boat had overturned the previous night off the coast of the Taiz governorate. It cited “strong winds and overloading” as the cause.

“This highlights the perilous journeys between Yemen and Africa,” the agency said in a statement on X. It added that it was working with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and partners to assist survivors and “address protection needs.”

No further details were immediately provided and it was not clear from where the boat had originated.

The waterways between Yemen and the Horn of Africa have become a common route for refugees and migrants travelling in both directions. The area saw a spike in Yemenis fleeing the country after a civil war broke out in 2014. Houthi rebels and government forces reached a truce deal in April of 2022 that has resulted in a decrease in violence and the easing of the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Meanwhile, some of those fleeing conflict in Africa, particularly in Somalia and Ethiopia, have sought refuge in Yemen or have sought to travel through the country to the more prosperous Gulf countries. The route remains one of the “busiest and most perilous” migration routes in the world, according to the IOM.

Last year, 97,000 migrants arrived in Yemen from the Horn of Africa. That far outpaced the 2023 figures of 73,000 migrants arriving in Yemen.

The journey is often deadly. Since 2014, the IOM has recorded 1,860 migrant deaths and disappearances along the route.

In June, at least 49 people died and 140 went missing after their vessel capsized off the Alghareef Point in Yemen’s Shabwah governorate. The boat had departed from Somalia carrying 115 Somali nationals and 145 Ethiopians, according to the IOM. Six children were among the dead.

At least 62 people died along the same route in two shipwrecks off the coast of Djibouti in April.

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