

At least 30 dead in migrant boat accidents in Greece

ATHENS Greek coast guards scoured for survivors in the Aegean Sea on Saturday after the latest in a series of migrant boat accidents that have killed at least 30 people in just days.

Late Friday, the coastguard found 16 bodies, including those of three women and a baby, and rescued 63 people from a boat that overturned and sank near the island of Paros.

According to those rescued, around 80 people had been on the vessel that was bound for Italy.

Smugglers operating from Cesme and Bodrum on the Turkish coast are packing migrants in yachts to send them to Italy using new, more dangerous routes, according to the ERT television channel.

Three coast guard patrol boats, private vessels, a coast guard plane as well as divers searched for more survivors, officials said.

The latest tragedy – the third since Wednesday – came amid high smuggler activity not seen in Greek

waters in months.

Hours earlier, 11 bodies were recovered from another boat that ran aground on an islet north of the Greek island of Antikythera on Thursday evening.

Coast guard said on Saturday that two of the rescued migrants – both men suspected of being the smugglers – were arrested.

Ninety people stranded on the islet were rescued.

And on Wednesday, a dinghy carrying migrants capsized off the

island of Folegandros, killing at least three people.

'Indifferent to human life'

Thirteen people were rescued, while dozens remain missing, Greek authorities said.

Survivors gave conflicting accounts: Some said there had been 32 people on board, while others put the number around 50, a coast guard official said.

The UN refugee agency said the Folegandros accident could end up

being the worst in the Aegean this year, as an unknown number of people were still missing.

"This shipwreck is a painful reminder that people continue to embark on perilous voyages in search of safety," said Adriano Silvestri, the UNHCR's assistant representative in Greece.

Earlier Friday, the coastguard had intercepted another boat with 92 men and boys on board after it ran aground on the coast of the Peloponnese peninsula. **AFP**

Advertisement

Tens of thousands join Sudan anti-coup rallies

KHARTOUM Tens of thousands of Sudanese protesters rallied Saturday two months after a military coup, demanding that soldiers "go back to the barracks" and calling for a transition to civilian rule.

Waving flags, beating drums, dancing and chanting, crowds marched on the streets of Khartoum despite severed communications and a heavy presence of security forces who later fired tear gas to disperse them.

An AFP journalist saw injured people being evacuated by demonstrators.

The Doctors' Committee, part of the pro-democracy movement, reported that security forces fired tear gas into hospitals, attacking doctors as well as the wounded.

Officers had earlier barricaded bridges connecting the capital to suburbs, cut phone lines and restricted internet access ahead of the planned protests.

At least 48 people have died in crackdowns during weeks of demonstrations, according to the Doctors' Committee, and Khartoum's state governor has warned that security forces "will deal with those who break the law and create chaos".

Demonstrators converged on the presidential palace in Khartoum, the headquarters of the military government in control since General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan seized power on October 25.

Burhan held civilian leader Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok effectively under house arrest for weeks.

After international pressure including a cut-off of vital aid, Burhan reinstated him on November 21 under a deal promising elections for July 2023.

The move alienated many of Hamdok's pro-democracy supporters, who dismissed it as providing a cloak of legitimacy for Burhan's coup.

"What happened on October 25 was a coup... and we will not stop demonstrating

until we have a civilian government," a masked woman protester near the presidential palace said on Saturday.

Othman Mustafa, a 31-year-old male demonstrator, said: "We don't just want the military out, we want to choose our own Sudan that looks like us, that responds to our demands and gives everyone equal rights".

As well as rallies in Khartoum and its suburbs, protesters also marched on the streets of Wad Madani, a city around 150 kilometres to the south, witnesses said.

Others reported demonstrations at Atbara in the north and Port Sudan on the Red Sea coast.

Security forces with cranes used shipping containers to block the bridges across the Nile River connecting Khartoum to the sister cities of Omdurman and North Khartoum, and web monitoring group NetBlocks reported mobile internet services cut at sunrise on Saturday.

Activists reported the arrest of several colleagues from Friday night onwards, and Volker Perthes, the United Nations special envoy to Sudan, urged the authorities to "protect" the protests.

"Freedom of expression is a human right," Perthes said on Saturday, adding that it includes "full access" to the internet.

The Doctors' Committee called on the world "to monitor what happens in Sudan on the issue of the revolutionary movement for freedom and democracy".

Khartoum's governor warned that "approaching or attacking buildings of strategic sovereignty is punishable by law".

At rallies on December 19, crowds began a "sit-in" protest outside the presidential palace. It recalled the action which ultimately led to the ouster of veteran strongman Omar al-Bashir three years earlier after mass demonstrations. **AFP**

INVITATION FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS

PMU My Thuan would like to invite for submission of Bids as follows:

- Project:** Component 1A, Tan Van - Nhon Trach Road Construction Project – Stage 1 under HCMC Ring Road No.3. Location: Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai province, Vietnam.
Scope of the Project: 8.75 km, design speed: 80km/h, 4 lanes; 2 bridge (includes Nhon Trach bridge with balance cantilever) and 1 interchange.
Fund: EDCF Loan Agreement VNM-58 of Government of Korea and counterpart fund of Government of Vietnam.
- Package:**
 - **Package CW1: Construction of Nhon Trach bridge and approach road (Km10+000-Km12+600):** Cost estimate (includes VAT and contingency): VND 2,074.75 billion ~ \$ 91.12 million ~ KRW 102.91 billion; Construction schedule: 36 months.
 - **Package CW2: Construction of Km5+000-Km10+000 and Km12+600-Km13+750:** Cost estimate (includes VAT and contingency): VND 1,252.32 billion ~ \$ 55 million ~ KRW 62.12 billion; Construction schedule: 30 months.
- Bid solicitor:** PMU My Thuan under Ministry of Transport.
- Selection method:** Competitive Bidding in compliance with the procedures specified in the Guideline for Procurement under EDCF Loans.
- The Eligibility of the Bidder(s):**
 - Nationals of the Republic of Korea (including juridical persons incorporated in the Republic of Korea in accordance with its laws; hereinafter the same shall apply)
 - Foreign corporations in which nationals of the Republic of Korea hold more than 50% of shares as well as foreign subsidiaries of a foreign corporation of which nationals of the Republic of Korea reserve the management rights and are vested with the business performances
 - Consortiums built by nationals of the Republic of Korea with the corporations set up in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Borrower's country (Vietnam) in which nationals of the Republic of Korea hold more than 50% of shares or have the de facto decision-making rights.
- Issuance time:** from 9:00 AM (Hanoi time), December 30th, 2021 to no later than 9:00 AM (Hanoi time), February 16th, 2022 (during the working time).
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of 200 US Dollars. The method of payment will be either by cash or by electronic payment transfer:
 - + Account Number: 135.10.00.9856789
 - + Referred Bank: Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV), Gia Dinh Branch
 - + Beneficiary/Depositor: Project Management Unit My Thuan
- Location for issuance:**
 - + Bidding Documents shall be issued by one of the following methods: (1) Direct method: PMU My Thuan; Address: 127B Le Van Duyet street, ward 3, Binh Thanh district, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Tel: (84)-28-3841-0088; Fax: (84)-28-3841-1872; Email: pmumythuan@mt.gov.vn; or (2) Via email: In case the Bid solicitor received bidder's request.
 - + The Bid solicitor shall issue the Bidding Documents to the bidder which satisfy Eligibility conditions and pay a nonrefundable fee as prescribed as item 7 mentioned above.
- Bidders shall directly submit or send by post the Bids document to PMU My Thuan's address and must ensure receipt before 9:00 AM (Hanoi time), February 16th, 2022 (during the working time).
- The Bids are opened publicly:
 - + Package CW1: at 9:00 AM (Hanoi time), February 16th, 2022, PMU My Thuan's address.
 - + Package CW2: at 9:30 AM (Hanoi time), February 16th, 2022, PMU My Thuan's address.