

IOM Confirms Deadly Attack on Refugee Boat off Yemen



Geneva, March 17 (RHC-Xinhua), -- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said Friday that 31 Somalis reportedly lost their lives in an alleged helicopter attack on a refugee boat late on Thursday.

"Our people said they know that Somalis were killed in 'an attack,' they do not know if it was a helicopter," IOM spokesman Joel Millman told the press here.

"The press is reporting that it was a helicopter, and apparently coastguard officials have confirmed it," he added.

Millman confirmed that the vessel "was full of Somalis" and that over 80 survivors were rescued. He warned however that the death toll could be higher since 24 of those saved are in critical conditions.

It remains unclear who carried out the attack on the vessel which was believed to be bound for Sudan after setting off from the Yemeni town of Houdaydah.

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