

Four migrants dead as boat sinks in English Channel



Migrants often try to cross the English Channel in small and unsafe boats. (Photo: Press TV)

Paris, October 27 (RHC)-- A long-expected tragedy has struck in the English Channel after a boat reportedly carrying migrants sank with the loss of at least four lives. Early reports indicate that the dead include two adults and two children. Fifteen other migrants have reportedly been rescued and taken to hospital.

According to French officials, a large search and rescue operation began earlier on Tuesday (27 October) after the vessel was seen to be experiencing “difficulty” off the coast of Dunkirk in north-western France.

British Home Secretary, Priti Patel, reacted immediately to the sinking by saying the “tragic news highlights the dangers that come with crossing the [English] Channel.” Patel added: “I will do everything I can to stop callous criminals exploiting vulnerable people.”

Patel has adopted a hardline stance on the issue of cross-Channel migration in recent months. She even traveled to France in the summer to persuade French officials to adopt a tougher position on the issue.

Furthermore, Patel has tried to involve the British armed forces in intercepting migrant boats, which critics have claimed could potentially place migrants’ lives at risk.

The British government’s plan to militarize the issue came under intense criticism at the international level. The UN Refugee Agency said in August that it was “troubled” by the plans to “intercept and return” vessels, before adding that the numbers involved remain “low and manageable.”

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