

At Least Five Dead After Refugee Boat Sinks Off Libya



Tripoli, November 7 (RHC)-- At least five refugees have died and an unknown number are feared missing after their boat capsized off western Libya, say Libyan coastguard officials and a charity. The rubber boat was carrying about 140 people when it overturned close to the border between Libyan and international waters, Libyan officials said on Monday. The Libyan coastguard rescued 45 survivors and brought them back to Tripoli harbor.

Seawatch, a German non-governmental organization that has a rescue vessel in the Mediterranean, said at least five refugees, including a toddler, died. Seawatch rescued 58 people, the group said in a statement. The survivors brought to Tripoli were from West African countries, including Nigeria and Senegal.

Libya is the main departure point for refugees trying to travel by boat to Europe. But numbers crossing to Italy have fallen sharply since July due to a drop in people smuggling and increased activity by Libya's coastguard.

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