

THE NEWSCAST

AN EGYPTIAN COURT SENTENCES 56 DEFENDANTS TO PRISON IN THE CASE OF A SUNKEN BOAT CARRYING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

An Egyptian court yesterday sentenced 56 defendants to prison terms ranging from two to 13 years in the case of a sunken boat carrying illegal immigrants, which resulted in the death of 203 people.

The Rashid Misdemeanor Court sentenced 56 defendants to prison terms ranging from two to 13 years and acquitted one defendant in the case of the sunken illegal immigration boat off the coast of Rashid. They were charged with manslaughter, fraud, hiding defendants, and engaging in unauthorized labor recruitment.

According to Egyptian law, misdemeanor courts can issue prison sentences of up to three years unless the defendants are prosecuted under special laws that impose harsher penalties. The court can also sentence a single defendant for multiple crimes.

The public prosecution had charged the defendants with manslaughter, negligence, recklessness, using the boat "Al-Rizk Bi Idhn Allah" for an unauthorized purpose, not using sufficient rescue equipment, endangering children's lives, practicing unauthorized overseas labor recruitment, and using the boats "Al-Ghazal Al-Jadida" and "Al-Hajj Fathi Abdeen" in violation of their licensing terms, resulting in the deaths of 203 people.

The incident dates back to September of last year, when an illegal immigration boat sank off the coast of Rashid, northwest of Cairo, leading to the deaths of 203 people and the rescue of 164 by the navy and border guards.

At that time, Egyptian authorities arrested 38 suspects, including boat owners, crews, and illegal immigration brokers, and referred them to the public prosecution, which in turn referred them to the Rashid Misdemeanor Court.

The issue of illegal immigration remains a constant and pressing topic in discussions between Egyptian officials and their European counterparts. European leaders complained last year about the increasing number of illegal immigrants coming through Egypt.

In mid-last year, Mario Parente, head of the Italian intelligence and internal security department, stated that the number of illegal immigrants arriving from Egypt had doubled, noting that "the influx of migrants departing from Egyptian coasts recorded a sharp increase of 104%."

Recently, there has been a rise in attempts at illegal immigration by Egyptians and foreigners via Egyptian coasts, especially those on the Mediterranean Sea, due to political unrest and high unemployment rates in the region.



FAMILY OF SYRIAN WHO DIED OF THIRST IN ALGERIA: "WE REGRET SENDING HIM TO EUROPE"

Twelve Syrian migrants and two Algerians were found dead from thirst in the Algerian desert near the Libyan border. In an interview with Migrant News, a relative of one of the victims revealed harrowing details. The family of the young Syrian man, Issa Sharif, was overwhelmed with shock and sorrow after seeing his name on the list of Syrians who died of thirst in the desert of Illizi Province, Algeria, a few days ago.

In an interview with Migrant News, Kawa Adham from Al-Hasakah Governorate said, "We were informed through social media that my cousin Issa's name was among the victims of the incident."

Issa Sharif was among 12 Syrians, including a ten-year-old child, who died of thirst in the desert of Illizi Province, bordering Libya in the southeast of the country, according to the Algerian Relief Association for Search and Rescue, which specializes in rescuing lost people in the desert.

The association added that the victims' ages ranged from 10 to 57 years, and all were male. The incident brought back memories of Syrians fleeing their country by sea or land on deadly journeys.

The Relief Association published the names of the victims who "were found in the desert area of Dayet El Fersig," currently experiencing extremely high temperatures.

Kawa Adham revealed horrifying details of the journey his cousin undertook, starting from Lebanon where he had been living for over twenty years.

He said, "Issa decided to travel to Europe. He took a plane to Libya and then traveled with the help of smugglers to Algeria. In the desert, the vehicle they were in had an accident, and they were left without water or food, losing contact for two days."

He added, "We later learned that they died of thirst. Our family wants the authorities to send the body of the deceased back to Syria to be buried in the northeastern regions of Syria."

LIBYA: WHO IS KILLING MIGRANTS AND BURYING THEM IN MASS GRAVES?



Hakim Baltifa pauses in the "Face to Face" segment to discuss the statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who said his office is investigating reports of a mass grave discovered in the desert on the Libyan-Tunisian border. This follows the earlier discovery of at least 65 migrant bodies at another location earlier this year. His guests from Tripoli are Mr. Ahmed Hamza, President of the National Human Rights Institution in Libya, and Dr. Nasser Abu Deeb, Secretary-General of the Libya Al-Ummah Party.

Germany: Calls for Continued Strict Border Checks



The Free Democratic Party (FDP), also known as the German Liberal Party and the junior partner in Germany's ruling coalition, has called for the continuation of strict border checks that were implemented during the UEFA European Championship (Euro 2024) until further notice to curb irregular migration.

In statements to the German "Funke" media group, Christian Dürr, leader of the FDP parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, explained the reason behind this call, stating that the police inspections have been "extremely effective in apprehending those trying to enter the country illegally."

Dürr added that he does not have a specific deadline for these measures, pointing out that internal border checks can only be lifted when there is a system that fully protects the European external borders. He continued, "But this is a very effective tool at the moment."

It is noteworthy that the Secretary-General of the Liberal Alliance, Bijan Djir-Sarai, had called at the end of June 2024 for the extension of border checks by the Federal Police on all German borders for a year. The original plan was to maintain these measures until shortly after the Euro 2024 tournament, which is happening this current weekend.

Since mid-June 2024, there have been border inspections with Denmark, France, and the Benelux countries, where such measures had not been previously implemented.

At the end of May 2024, the German Ministry of the Interior announced the extension of fixed border checks on the land borders with Poland, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland—measures that had been in place since the fall of 2023—for another six months, until mid-December 2024. The ministry justified the extension of these measures to combat smuggling crimes and curb irregular migration.



DESPITE THE RISKS, THE ABSENCE OF LAW IN LIBYA IS A PULL FACTOR FOR MIGRANTS

Libya continues to experience significant security vacuums in a country divided by at least two competing authorities. This situation attracts irregular migrants aiming to reach Europe, but the violations against them are substantial.

Nika William, a 24-year-old woman from Ghana, initially believed Libya would be a place where she could earn money to continue her journey to Europe. However, the country became associated with harrowing experiences for her. She recounts to DW: "I fell into the hands of a Libyan gang, was raped, and became pregnant before being imprisoned in Al-Asa Prison in Libya."

She adds, "They would line us up and whip us one by one every morning. I lost the baby and still can't believe I survived," William says, telling DW that the fear hasn't subsided even though she was eventually released. She adds, "All I want is a safe future, but I don't know if I'll ever achieve that or if today will be my last day."

Michael Shira from Nigeria shares her sentiments: "All I want is to reach Europe, where I believe I can find more stable life opportunities," he says, adding, "But the road is long and full of dangers, and I don't know if I'll make it."

The occasion for speaking to Michael Shira was a raid carried out by Libyan security forces in uniform without warning this week. Officers stormed a café where a group of irregular migrants was waiting for potential employers.

The men were rounded up, and some were arbitrarily detained. That morning, 19-year-old Michael Shira from Nigeria, who lives in coastal Zuwara near the Tunisian border, was fortunate to be relatively far from the raid location. He tells DW: "We live in constant fear. Libyan authorities are currently detaining migrants wherever they see them."

Shira has been in Libya for a few months, waiting for an opportunity to board a secret boat to Europe. He explains: "Initially, I was in Tunisia, but the Tunisian police chased me." He later fled to Libya when the Tunisian border forces almost arrested him: "They intended to hand us over to the Libyan authorities, and everyone knows what happens after that."



GREECE: "DISASTROUS SITUATION" IN MIGRANT RECEPTION CAMPS

A new report released last Friday by the Council of Europe adds to a series of documentation by humanitarian organizations in Greece, revealing a "disastrous situation" in EU-funded reception camps, alongside police violence and forced returns of migrants to Turkey.

Following visits conducted at the end of last year, the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) reached conclusions indicating that migrants in Greece are subjected to violations in closed reception camps or police detention centers upon their arrest. Practices included forced returns to Turkey and "violent" treatment by police towards asylum seekers, in addition to deteriorating health conditions, according to the report issued on Friday, July 12th.

Based on interviews conducted in several camps, it was found that detained foreigners experienced physical mistreatment "purportedly committed intentionally by police officers in some police stations in Athens and in former deportation detention centers in Amygdaleza (25 km north of Athens), Corinth (80 km west of Athens), and Tavros (in Athens)." Many individuals also reported mistreatment by coast guards during interception at sea, including "beatings with batons and rifle butts, kicking, punching, insults, and racial abuse."



DR. MAHMOUD MAHY EL-DIN: EGYPT IS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES MOST AFFECTED BY ILLEGAL MIGRATION



Special Envoy of the United Nations for the 2030 Agenda Financing, Dr. Mahmoud Mohie El-Din, stated that Egypt is among the countries most affected by illegal migration. He noted that many migrants from neighboring countries use Egypt as a transit country, and over time Egypt may transition from a transit state to a permanent residency destination.

"Arab Interior Ministers": Information exchange enhances plans to combat illegal migration

Dr. Mohamed Ben Ali Kouman, the Secretary-General of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, delivered a speech in which he said: "It is my honor as I welcome you to the heart of Arab security to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to Tunisia, its President, government, and people, for the generous support provided to the Council of Arab Interior Ministers and its general secretariat, which critically contributes to the success of various activities and programs... I also take pride in conveying my utmost respect and gratitude to the Ministers of Interior for their constant care of their esteemed council and their relentless efforts to enhance Arab security cooperation."

He added: "Today, you convene amidst regional and international conditions characterized by the proliferation of organized crime, particularly in drug trafficking, narcotics, human trafficking, and the smuggling of irregular migrants, among other criminal challenges which your agencies bear significant responsibility in combating... The agenda of this conference reflects the importance of these challenges. The item related to member states' experiences in document forgery and countermeasures presents an opportunity to exchange information on the most crucial methods and techniques, and appropriate measures to detect forgery, thereby preventing the use of forged documents in illegal migration and other criminal activities."

He continued: "Undoubtedly, the participation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in this conference will provide an opportunity to learn from best practices regionally and internationally... On the information exchange front, you will review the outcomes of yesterday's committee meeting to consider establishing a platform or mechanism for exchanging travelers' vital information—a ambitious project that, if properly prepared with due consideration for legal and technical aspects, could constitute a significant step forward in Arab security cooperation."

He concluded: "Today's discussions will extensively cover combating human trafficking and illegal migration, through reviewing the trafficking routes across Arab borders, allowing the discovery of new smuggling methods and trends in this phenomenon, and through the guidance plan to combat illegal migration in its modified format, which we hope will provide a template for member states in formulating their national plans."



DETENTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF A PRIVATE LIBYAN AIRLINE ON CHARGES OF TRANSPORTING IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

The Commercial Director of the Libyan airline "Ghadames" has been arrested as part of an investigation into the transportation of migrants seeking to enter US territory via Nicaragua, according to the Public Prosecutor's office. The case involves flights organized by Ghadames Airlines from Tripoli and Benghazi airports, transporting "hundreds of people wishing to enter US territory through Nicaragua, in violation of applicable immigration laws," as stated in a statement issued by the Attorney General's office.

As part of this investigation, authorities have ordered the "detention of the Commercial Director of Ghadames Airlines for engaging in activities detrimental to the country's interests," the source announced late Sunday. The Attorney General clarified that the company "operated flights carrying hundreds of people from East Asian countries without adhering to the obligations of the airline and national legislation regarding immigration, as well as the requirements arising from international conventions, especially the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air."

According to an investigation published by "Le Monde" in late May, several chartered flights operated by Ghadames Airlines transported hundreds of Asian migrants from Benghazi in the East and Tripoli in the West to Managua, Nicaragua. Since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's regime in 2011, Libya has been plagued by conflicts and divisions, with two rival governments: one in Tripoli (West) led by Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, recognized by the United Nations, and the other in the East supported by the parliament and General Khalifa Haftar.

Exploiting the prevailing instability, human trafficking networks have developed secret routes to transport thousands of migrants from Africa to Europe. According to the International Organization for Migration, there are over 700,000 migrants in Libya, mostly from Niger and Egypt. However, the Minister of Interior of the Tripoli government, Imad Trabelsi, announced on July 10 that there are "around 2.5 million foreigners in Libya, 70 to 80 percent of whom entered illegally."



FORGERY OF VISA DOCUMENTS LEADS TO THE DOWNFALL OF THREE INDIVIDUALS

Police in Oujda, on Wednesday, managed to arrest three individuals aged between 30 and 44, two of whom have criminal records. They are suspected of involvement in a case related to forging official documents and using them to prepare Schengen visa applications, as well as organizing illegal migration and human trafficking.

According to a statement from the Oujda Security Directorate received by Hespess, the suspects are allegedly linked to a criminal network engaged in forging administrative documents that are part of visa application files for European countries. These forged files are suspected to have been used in organizing illegal migration.

The operation conducted by the police resulted in the discovery of forged documents, certificates, a collection of stamps, counterfeit contracts, as well as a printing machine and computer equipment believed to be used in these criminal activities.

The Oujda Security Directorate has placed the suspects under provisional custody pending further investigation by the competent public prosecutor's office. This is aimed at identifying any further extensions of this criminal activity and apprehending additional participants and accomplices involved in these criminal acts.



ITALY: INCREASE IN DEPORTATION OPERATIONS OF CRIMINAL RECORD



Italian security sources have announced an increase in deportation operations targeting immigrants with criminal records. In the first six months of this year alone, police in Venice (Veneto province, north Italy) carried out 52 deportation operations against foreign nationals with various criminal records. Additionally, seven other deportations were conducted from Temporary Reception Centers (CPR) in the past two weeks alone, along with 19 direct repatriations of migrants to their home countries. These numbers reflect a significant increase compared to the previous year. Recent operations included the deportation of a Tunisian with multiple criminal convictions for property crimes, thefts, and robberies, as well as a Moldovan accompanied to a Temporary Reception Center (CPR) in Ponte Galeria, Rome, suspected of numerous property crimes and drug trafficking. The latter individual is also under investigation for persecutory acts against his partner, invoking serious concern under local law.

Italy...two farms closed due to inhumane treatment of migrant workers

For long periods, with very low wages, and being treated in conditions similar to slavery, all of these and other conditions were the reason for the closure of two farms in Italy. Investigations are underway into the owners, who are of Indian origin

Two farms in Italy where more than 30 Indian harvest workers were kept in slavery-like conditions have been closed. According to the judiciary, investigators at the same time near the city of Verona in the north of the country confiscated assets with a total value of about 500,000 euros (\$545,624). The two owners of these assets, who are also from India, are being investigated.

According to the authorities, the two men lured a total of 33 of their citizens to come from their country to Italy with the promise of receiving good wages and better living conditions. Despite this, the workers had to pay 17,000 euros to enter the country and obtain a supposed work permit, or become indebted. Their passports were taken from them upon arrival.

The workers were forced to work in the fields on the two farms located near the municipality of Colonia Veneta for between 10 and 12 hours, seven days a week, with a wage of 4 euros per hour. The authorities reported that they were housed in dilapidated houses with sanitation facilities unfit for human use.

An Indian immigrant died after losing his arm while working in the fields in the countryside of the Italian capital. It is worth noting that the Indian immigrant Satnam died in a hospital in Rome, on June 19, where he was working on a rural farm near the Italian capital, when an agricultural machine amputated his arm in a field near Latina on the outskirts of the capital, and his employers abandoned him. To his fate on the street.

Indian citizen Satnam Singh, a 31-year-old immigrant who works as a farmer, was exploited and then thrown into the street, where he was left prey to pain, after he lost his right arm in an accident while working on a farm in Borgo Santa Maria, in the countryside near Latina. South of Rome. The man died of his wounds on Wednesday morning, June 19, at San Camillo Hospital in Rome, where he had been transferred in critical condition on Monday afternoon.

Satnam Singh's arm was amputated by the agricultural machinery used to pack fruit by Lovato Agricultural Company, leaving his arm nearby inside the fruit picking basket. These horrific details form part of a horrific story of exploitation by the owner of the company that employed the man, who was already under investigation for causing injury through negligence and failure to assist, but now faces charges of manslaughter.

