

THE NEWSCAST

THE NATIONAL GUARD IN TUNISIA UNCOVERS A CRIMINAL NETWORK SPECIALIZING IN SMUGGLING MIGRANTS SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

The Central Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Justice Affairs Administration in Ben Arous has uncovered a criminal network specializing in recruiting and transporting migrants from Sub-Saharan countries for participation in irregular migration operations, according to a statement issued by the National Guard on Monday.

The National Guard explained that this successful operation followed in-depth investigations, during which the members of the network were identified and tracked, leading to the cessation of their criminal activities. The operation resulted in the arrest of five individuals suspected of involvement in these activities, and legal action has been taken against them.

The National Guard emphasized that "this step is part of the ongoing efforts to combat human trafficking and irregular migration, protect lives, and address those attempting to exploit difficult humanitarian situations for illegal gains." It stressed its "full commitment to pursuing anyone who attempts to engage in such crimes."



INCREASING PRESSURE ON SPANISH GOVERNMENT OVER RISING NUMBERS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN CANARY ISLANDS

The Spanish government, led by Pedro Sánchez, is facing increasing pressure due to the significant rise in illegal migration, particularly in the Canary Islands, which feel neglected by both Madrid and the European Union. According to the French newspaper *Sud Ouest*, African migrant boats arrive daily in the Canary Islands, prompting Sánchez to embark on a trip from Tuesday to Thursday to three key migration countries: Mauritania, Gambia, and Senegal.

The nature of the assistance Sánchez plans to provide to these countries, especially Mauritania, which he visited in February and is a major departure point for migrants, has not yet been specified. In a meeting with the President of the Canary Islands government, Fernando Clavijo, the latter estimated that there are "over 150,000 refugees" ready to sail to the archipelago from Mauritania.

Clavijo urged the European Union to take responsibility, noting that the Canary Islands are not the final destination for migrants but a gateway to Europe. According to the Spanish Ministry of the Interior, the Canary Islands have seen a 126% increase in incoming migrants this year compared to last year, with expectations of further increases by the end of the year.

The crisis extends beyond the Canary Islands, with the Spanish city of Ceuta on the northern coast of Morocco also experiencing an increase in arrivals. These areas face particular challenges with the rising number of unaccompanied minors, for whom local regions are responsible.

Sánchez's government attempted to pass a legal amendment to allow the distribution of these minors across the country, but opposition from right-wing parties and the Catalan independence party prevented this. Despite the government's renewal of a 50 million euro aid package for the Canary Islands, this amount does not cover the actual costs the regional government claims to have incurred since the beginning of the year, estimated at 150 million euros.



GERMAN CHANCELLOR SCHOLZ CALLS FOR INCREASED DEPORTATION OF ILLEGAL FOREIGNERS AFTER SOLINGEN ATTACK

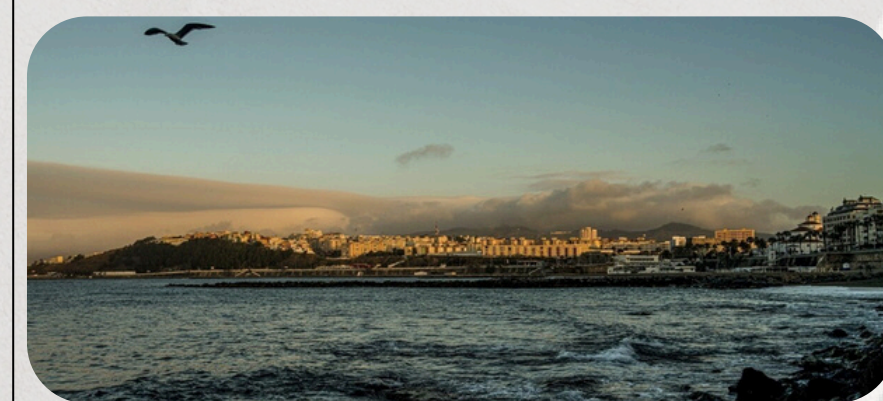


European media reported that German Chancellor Olaf Scholz stated that following the attack in the city of Solingen, law enforcement agencies will intensify their efforts to increase the deportation of foreigners who are illegally residing in the country.

Scholz mentioned during a memorial service at the scene of the attack that "we must do everything in our power to ensure the return and deportation of those who cannot or are not permitted to stay in Germany." He described the attack on the music festival as "terrorism targeting everyone" in Germany. In this context, Friedrich Merz, leader of the opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU), called on Chancellor Scholz to stop accepting more migrants following the Solingen attack.

Reports indicated that on Friday evening, around 9:45 PM, a man randomly stabbed several passersby with a knife during a festival in Solingen. The attack resulted in the deaths of two men aged 67 and 56, and a 56-year-old woman, while eight other individuals were injured, four of whom are in critical condition.

Security alert in Morocco and Spain after migrants storm Ceuta under cover of fog



In the early hours of Sunday, August 25, several migrants, including adults and minors, managed to breach the city of Ceuta.

A Moroccan and Spanish security alert was triggered. According to local press reports in Ceuta, the migrants took advantage of the thick fog covering the area to bypass barriers and reach the shore. This large influx of migrants, including minors of both genders, prompted heightened security measures from both Moroccan and Spanish authorities.

As a result, the security alert was raised, and additional human resources were allocated to tighten surveillance in the area and prevent further attempts of illegal migration to the occupied city. These developments come amid increasing attempts of illegal migration to Ceuta, prompting both Moroccan and Spanish sides to tighten security measures to address the tense situation.

RECORD NUMBER OF MIGRANTS CROSSING THE CHANNEL FACES MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR NEW LABOUR GOVERNMENT

The number of migrants arriving in the United Kingdom via the English Channel surged to unprecedented levels in the first half of 2024, according to data released by the Home Office on Thursday. Authorities processed applications from 13,489 individuals who arrived during the first six months of the year, marking an 18% increase compared to the previous year and the highest number ever recorded for this period.

The number of migrants crossing the Channel, one of the world's busiest shipping routes, totaled 11,433 between January and June 2023. These figures highlight the challenges faced by the new Labour government in the UK as it attempts to reduce the influx of arrivals.

This increase follows more than a week of unrest in various parts of England and Northern Ireland, described as anti-migration riots, where slogans such as "Stop the Boats" were chanted. This phrase reflects a pledge made by former Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to reduce the number of migrants, a promise that has not been fulfilled. Sunak lost last month's general election to Labour leader Keir Starmer.

The unrest in over ten towns and cities coincided with a violent stabbing incident targeting a group of children, which was mistakenly attributed to a Muslim asylum seeker. Meanwhile, the number of arrivals from the health sector, students, and their families decreased in the final quarter of the year up to June.



LIBYAN AUTHORITIES RESCUE HUNDREDS OF MIGRANTS FROM SMUGGLING GANGS AMID INCREASED HUMAN TRAFFICKER ACTIVITY

Authorities in both western and eastern Libya have managed to rescue "hundreds of migrants" both on land and at sea from the clutches of smuggling gangs and have successfully prevented dozens more from drowning in the Mediterranean. This comes amid a rising activity of human traffickers on the Libyan coast, raising questions about the effectiveness of the conflicting governments' pledges to address these flows.

In two separate operations, Libyan authorities in Tripoli reported saving 173 migrants from drowning in the Mediterranean, while smuggling gangs have resumed their activities, taking advantage of the country's political turmoil. The "General Administration of Coastal Security" in western Libya reported that early on Sunday, a maritime patrol aboard the vessel "Wadi Gan" rescued 123 irregular migrants, including men, women, and children from various African nationalities. The migrants were aboard a "dilapidated boat" in Libyan territorial waters off the coast of Zuwara, which is one of the main departure points for migrants heading to European shores.

The administration stated that the operation, led by its director General Bashir Bin Nour Suleiman, concluded with the migrants being taken to the "Shiab Port" under the Coastal Security of Tripoli, where they were handed over to the Illegal Immigration Agency for legal processing.

Hours after the first operation, the administration reported the rescue of 51 irregular migrants from different African countries off the coast of Qura Boli, after their boat malfunctioned. They were also taken to "Shiab Port" pending their transfer to the Illegal Immigration Agency.

Despite the efforts of the rival governments in Tripoli and eastern Libya to hold international conferences on irregular migration, observers see a need to eliminate the thriving migrant smuggling market in Libyan cities and to end the political conflict. They point out that there is a lucrative trade managed by gangs, armed groups, and sometimes official security entities.



BOAT SINKS OFF YEMEN COAST: 13 DEAD, 14 MISSING, INCLUDING ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS



The International Organization for Migration (IOM) announced on Sunday that 13 people have died and 14 others are missing after a boat carrying Ethiopian migrants sank off the coast of Yemen.

In a press statement, the organization reported that "13 people tragically lost their lives, while 14 others remain missing after the boat sank off the coast of Taiz Governorate in Yemen last Tuesday."

The statement added that "the boat, which was coming from Djibouti, sank while carrying 25 Ethiopian migrants along with Yemeni nationals near the Dhubab district in Taiz Governorate."

The statement noted that "among the deceased, the bodies of 11 men and 2 women were found along the shores of Bab al-Mandab near the Dhubab district."

The statement also mentioned that "search operations are ongoing to locate the remaining missing migrants, including the Yemeni captain." Additionally, the statement indicated that "the causes of the boat's sinking remain unclear despite the ongoing efforts

Spain faces migration crisis in Canary Islands: Pedro Sanchez plans tour of Mauritania, Gambia and Senegal

The Spanish government, led by Pedro Sánchez, faces significant challenges due to the massive increase in the number of irregular migrants, particularly in the Canary Islands, which feel neglected by Madrid and Europe. According to French newspaper "Sud Ouest," emergency services report daily arrivals of boats carrying dozens of African migrants to the Canary Islands, located off the northwestern coast of Africa.

To address this crisis, Pedro Sánchez has decided to undertake a tour from Tuesday to Thursday in three key countries facing migration challenges: Mauritania, Gambia, and Senegal. The nature and extent of the assistance Sánchez plans to offer these countries, especially Mauritania, which he visited in February as a major departure point for migrants, have not yet been determined.

In a meeting with Pedro Sánchez on Friday, Fernando Clavijo, the President of the Canary Islands' regional government, estimated that there are "more than 150,000 refugees" ready to depart for the archipelago from Mauritania. Clavijo urged the European Union to take responsibility, emphasizing the need to avoid placing the burden of migration pressures solely on the Canary Islands, as migrants ultimately reach Spain and then Europe as a whole, not just the Canary Islands.



RWANDA AND THE UNITED NATIONS EXTEND THE AGREEMENT TO RECEIVE AFRICAN REFUGEES STRANDED IN LIBYA UNTIL 2025

On Friday, Rwanda, the African Union, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) extended their agreement to receive African refugees stranded in Libya.

According to a joint statement, the memorandum of understanding signed in September 2019 has been extended until December 31, 2025.

The statement clarified that the agreement reaffirms the commitment of all parties to provide protection and find lasting solutions for refugees and asylum seekers evacuated from Libya. Since the signing of the memorandum, over 2,300 refugees and asylum seekers from countries such as Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali have been evacuated, with approximately 1,800 of them resettled in third countries.

When the agreement was announced in 2019, Rwanda was prepared to accept up to 30,000 African refugees from Libya. The statement confirmed that the UNHCR will continue to provide protection and necessary assistance, including shelter, food, healthcare, and other essential services, to those evacuated while in Rwanda.

It is noteworthy that Libya has been in a state of chaos since the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi, and is currently governed by two rival administrations. This week, the United Nations expressed concern over the rapid deterioration of the economic and security situation in Libya.



33.4% INCREASE IN ILLEGAL BORDER CROSSINGS INTO GERMANY IN 2023

The Federal Criminal Police of Germany announced a significant increase in unauthorized border crossings into Germany, with a 33.4% rise in 2023 compared to the previous year.

According to the police report released on Wednesday, illegal immigration to Germany saw a notable increase in 2023, with 266,224 people suspected of entering the country illegally, as reported by Deutsche Welle.

Unauthorized border crossings also increased in other EU countries. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency reported a record 380,200 illegal crossings along the external borders of the Schengen Area, the highest level since 2016.



245 MIGRANTS RESCUED SOUTH OF CRETE: MOST OF THEM CAME FROM LIBYA VIA GAVDOS ISLAND



Greek authorities announced the rescue of 245 migrants over a 24-hour period south of Crete between Wednesday and Friday. The official channel "ERT" reported that most of these migrants had departed from the port of Tobruk in Libya, approximately 180 kilometers from the Greek islands, and arrived at the small island of Gavdos south of Crete.

Five individuals have been detained on suspicion of involvement in human trafficking.

Gavdos Island, the southernmost point of Greece, is an initial destination for migrants coming from Libya. However, the island, with a population of only about 100 residents, lacks the essential facilities to accommodate migrants. Therefore, the migrants are being transferred to Crete to temporarily meet their needs.

Britain announces new measures to combat illegal immigration and increase deportations

The British government announced new measures on Wednesday to combat illegal immigration, pledging to increase efforts against "smuggling gangs" and raise the number of deportations.

In a statement reported by the British newspaper "The Telegraph," Home Secretary Yvette Cooper expressed her intention to tackle traffickers, target employers hiring illegal migrants, and increase deportation operations. Cooper explained that she plans to expand migrant detention centers as part of a strategy to deport over 14,500 illegal migrants within the next six months, a rate not seen since 2018.

Cooper also mentioned that her department is taking strong measures to enhance border security and ensure strict enforcement of laws. She noted that up to 100 new specialists in intelligence and investigations will be added to the National Crime Agency to combat smuggling gangs and prevent dangerous boat crossings.

She expressed a desire to return to the level of deportations seen in 2018, adding that around 300 agents have been reassigned to review thousands of rejected asylum applications, including both forced and voluntary returns.

This announcement comes as the number of illegal migrants arriving on the English coast has increased, with over 200 migrants recorded last Monday, around 500 on Saturday, and 700 on August 11—a figure not seen on the English coast since the Labour Party came to power in July.

Combating illegal immigration was a key issue in the election campaign following 14 years of Conservative rule. Although Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer promised to address immigration "humanely," he scrapped his predecessors' plan to deport migrants to Rwanda and focused on reducing both legal and illegal migrant numbers.

