

Mediterranean Sea

Hundreds Feared Lost After Boat Overturns

BY FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press

ROME — A smuggler's boat crammed with hundreds of people overturned off Libya's coast as rescuers approached, causing what could be the Mediterranean's deadliest known migrant tragedy and intensifying pressure on the European Union Sunday to finally meet demands for decisive action.

Survivor accounts of the number aboard varied, with the Italian Coast Guard saying that the capsized boat had a capacity for "hundreds" of

people. Italian prosecutors said a Bangladeshi survivor flown to Sicily for treatment told them 950 people were aboard, including hundreds who had been locked in the hold by smugglers. Earlier, authorities said a survivor told them 700 migrants were on board.

It was not immediately clear if they were referring to the same survivor, and Premier Matteo Renzi said Italian authorities were "not in a position to confirm or verify" how many were on board when the boat set out from Libya.

Eighteen ships joined the rescue

effort, but only 28 survivors and 24 bodies had been pulled from the water by nightfall, Renzi said.

These small numbers make more sense if hundreds of people were locked in the hold, because with so much weight down below, "surely the boat would have sunk," said Gen. Antonino Iraso, of the Italian Border Police, which has deployed boats in the operation.

Prosecutor Giovanni Salvi told The Associated Press by phone from the city of Catania that a survivor from Bangladesh described the situation on the fishing boat to prosecu-

tors who interviewed him in a hospital. The man said about 300 people were in the hold, locked in there by the smugglers, when the vessel set out. He said that of the 950 who set out aboard the doomed boat, some 200 were women and several dozen were children.

Salvi stressed that there was no confirmation yet of the man's account and that the investigation was ongoing.

Iraso said the sea in the area is too deep for divers, suggesting that the final toll may never be known. The sea off Libya runs as deep as 3

miles (5 kilometers) or more.

"How can it be that we daily are witnessing a tragedy?" asked Renzi, who strategized with his top ministers ahead of Monday's European Union meeting in Luxembourg, where foreign ministers scrambled to add stopping the smugglers to their agenda.

Resurgent right-wing political parties have made a rallying cry out of a rising tide of illegal migration. So far this year, 35,000 asylum seekers and migrants have reached Europe and more than 900 are known to have died trying.

Empty Chairs Honor 168 Victims Of OKC Bombing

BY TIM TALLEY
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Every day when Dr. Rosslyn Biggs goes to work as a federal government veterinarian she is reminded of her mother, one of 168 people killed in the Oklahoma City bombing and honored Sunday on the 20th anniversary of the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. soil until Sept. 11, 2001.

Biggs has the same job once held by her mother, Dr. Margaret L. "Peggy" Clark, as a food safety veterinarian at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She interacts often with some of the people who worked with and recall her mother's professionalism.

"I remember her spirit and her dedication," Biggs said as she and other family members gathered around an empty chair adorned with flowers in a field of empty chairs designed to memorialize the victims of the April 19, 1995 bombing.

"It's wonderful to see that people still remember and still care," Biggs said.

Former President Bill Clinton, who was president when the attack occurred, spoke at Sunday's service at the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, where the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building once stood. Memorial officials estimated that 2,500 people attended the observance.

"Oklahoma City, you have chosen well," Clinton said. "For 20 years you have honored the memories of your loved ones. You have inspired us with the power of renewal."

Clinton said the city has recovered from the terrorist attack "in the face of mad, crazy people who think that differences are all that matter."

"The whole world needs you now," the former president said in reference to other deadly terrorist attacks that have occurred around the world.

The service started with a 168-second moment of silence to honor each of those who died. It concluded about 90 minutes later with survivors and tearful relatives of the dead reading the names of those killed.

"This was a place of unspeakable horror and tragedy," said Frank Keating, who completed his first 100 days as Oklahoma's governor the day before the attack. "How some evil individual would do what he did ... is unforgivable and absolutely unimaginable."

"The agony was consistent. The agony appeared never to end," Keating said.

After the service, LaDonna Battle and her family were standing between two of the 168 metal and glass chairs that now stand as a testament to those who were killed. The two chairs were inscribed



GREGORY CASTILLO/DALLAS MORNING NEWS/TNS

Metal chairs representing the 168 lives lost during the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing are shown during a 20th anniversary memorial at the Oklahoma City National Memorial Sunday in Oklahoma City.

with the names of her parents, Calvin and Peola Battle, who were arranging to receive Social Security benefits when the bomb detonated.

"We're completing a journey with steel hearts. We're rebuilding our lives," LaDonna Battle said.

Timothy McVeigh, an Army veteran with strong anti-government views, carried out the bombing as revenge for the deadly standoff between the FBI and Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, on April 19, 1993 — exactly two years before Oklahoma City.

McVeigh was convicted on federal murder and conspiracy charges in 1997 and executed in 2001.

His Army buddy, Terry Nichols, was convicted on federal and state bombing-related charges and is serving multiple life sentences in a federal prison.

In a statement, President Barack Obama thanked first responders who risked their lives after the bombing, law enforcement and prosecutors who brought the perpetrators to justice and ordinary men and women in Oklahoma for their resilience.

"If those murderers hoped to terrorize the American people that day, to break our spirits or shatter the bonds that unite us, then they completely and utterly failed," Obama said.

Video Claims To Show ISIS Execution

CAIRO (AP) — Islamic State militants in Libya shot and beheaded groups of captive Ethiopian Christians, a video purportedly from the extremists showed Sunday. The attack widens the circle of nations affected by the group's atrocities while showing its growth beyond a self-declared caliphate in Syria and Iraq.

The release of the 29-minute video comes a day after Afghanistan's president blamed the extremists for a suicide attack in his country that killed at least 35 people — and underscores the chaos gripping Libya after its 2011 civil war and the killing of dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

It also mirrored a film released in February showing militants beheading 21 captured Egyptian Christians on a Libyan beach, which immediately drew Egyptian airstrikes on the group's suspected positions in Libya. Whether Ethiopia would — or could — respond with similar military force remains unclear.

Ethiopia long has drawn the anger of Islamic extremists over its military's attacks on neighboring Somalia, whose population is almost entirely Muslim. While the militant in the video at one point said "Muslim blood that was shed under the hands of your religion is not cheap," it did not specifically mention the Ethiopian government's actions.

The video, released via militant social media accounts and websites, could not be independently verified by The Associated Press. However, it corresponded to other videos released by the Islamic State group and bore the symbol of its al-Furqan media arm.

Calif. Almonds Roasted In Water Debate

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — California almonds are becoming one of the world's favorite snacks and creating a multibillion-dollar bonanza for agricultural investors. But the crop extracts a staggering price from the land, consuming more water than all the showering, dish-washing and other indoor household water use of California's 39 million people.

As California enters its fourth year of drought and imposes the first mandatory statewide water cutbacks on cities and towns, the \$6.5 billion almond crop is helping drive a sharp debate about water use, agricultural interests and how both affect the state's giant economy.

Almonds have claimed the spotlight as "the poster child of all things bad in water," almond grower Bob Weimer said.

People around the world are eating over 1,000 percent more California almonds than they did just a decade ago, and last year almonds became the top export crop in the nation's top agriculture state. China's booming middle class is driving much of the demand.

That strong Asia market is producing up to 30 percent returns for investors, prompting agri-businesses to expand almond planting in the state by two-thirds in the past decade. The crop has come to be dominated by global corporations and investment funds.

N. Hampshire Voters Enjoy Crowded Field

NASHUA, New Hampshire (AP) — For New Hampshire Republicans, the early days of the 2016 presidential campaign feel like an embarrassment of riches.

The state's notoriously fickle, independent-minded voters are relishing a wide-open Republican race and are in no hurry to crown a front-runner. Nearly 20 potential candidates — senators, governors, business executives and more — have paraded through the state in recent days to curry favor with voters and court party leaders.

"The more, the better," said Jim Blake, a Republican from Londonderry.

The Republican landscape is the antithesis of the Democratic side on the nomination chase, where Hillary Rodham Clinton appears unlikely to face a serious primary challenge. Republican voters are cheering that contrast, and expect that the candidate who emerges from the GOP race will be battle-tested for the general election.

John Cebrowski, a Republican from Bedford, called his party's options "an all-star lineup" and the Democrats "like Double A ball."

Reagan Shooter Struggles To Integrate

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (AP) — The last man to shoot an American president now spends most of the year in a house overlooking the 13th hole of a golf course in a gated community.

He takes long walks along tree-lined paths, plays guitar and paints, grabs fast food at Wendy's. He drives around town in a silver Toyota Avalon, a car that wouldn't attract a second glance. Often, as if to avoid detection, he puts on a hat or visor before going out.

These days, John Hinckley Jr. lives much of the year like any average Joe: shopping, eating out, watching movies at a local Regal Cinemas.

Hinckley was just 25 when he shot President Ronald Reagan and three others in 1981, and when jurors found him not guilty by reason of insanity they said he needed treatment, not a lifetime in confinement. The verdict left open the possibility that he would one day live outside a mental hospital.

For the past year, under a judge's order, Hinckley has spent 17 days a month at his mother's home in Williamsburg, a small southeastern Virginia city known for its colonial roots. Freedom has come in stages and with strict requirements: meeting regularly while in town with both a psychiatrist and a therapist, getting a volunteer job. It has all been part of a lengthy process meant to reintegrate Hinckley, now nearing 60, back into society.

Colorado

Dozens Of Citations Issued At Pot Events

DENVER (AP) — Denver police said there were no major problems as marijuana celebrations continued for a second day on Sunday, but police tweeted a reminder that while recreational use of marijuana is legal in Colorado, people still can't use it in public.

Police spokeswoman Raquel Lopez said there was no estimate on the number of people who turned out on Saturday and Sunday, including many tourists who flocked to Colorado to take advantage of legal marijuana.

"We'd prefer not to be buzzkills this 4/20 weekend.

Consume responsibly, and designate a sober driver now," police tweeted on Sunday.

On Saturday, police issued about 60 citations. Police said most were for public consumption. No information was available on any arrests on Sunday.

"It certainly seems to be going OK," Lopez said Sunday.

The law against public consumption is widely flouted, especially around the 4/20 celebrations. Celebrations were held over the weekend near the Denver City and County Build-

ing, but police said no one had a permit in Denver for Monday, the unofficial stoner holiday of 4/20. However, a number of people were still expected to show up, and Lopez said police will issue citations at their discretion.

The origins of the number 420 as a code for marijuana are murky. Fans of the drug have long marked April 20 as a day to enjoy pot and call for increased legal access to it.

A small plane flew over the crowd with a banner urging people to grow their own marijuana.

Meanwhile, the University

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