

More than 120 Syrians aboard Greece migrant shipwreck

BEIRUT: At least 125 Syrians were on board a migrant ship that sank off Greece this week, relatives and activists said Friday, as rescuers scoured the waters for hundreds feared missing.

A blind 15-year-old boy and his 28-year-old sister from the southern Daraa province were among those on board, said their uncle, who declined to be named for security reasons.

"We have no trace of them, my nephew is blind and does not know how to swim," he said by telephone, adding the pair had flown directly from Damascus to Libya.

Lebanon tourism chiefs urge national unity to help boost holiday season income

BEIRUT: A Lebanese tourism chief has called on the country's political and security leaders to work together in helping create the conditions for a bumper summer season.

Pierre Al-Ashkar, head of the Federation of Tourist Syndicates in Lebanon urged authorities to ease restrictions on movement wherever possible to encourage visitors.

Tourism officials fear security risks and political tensions in Lebanon could discourage holidaymakers.

With the national economy in meltdown, an influx of tourists would provide struggling businesses with a welcome cash injection.

Jordan army downs drone carrying weapon parts from Syria

The Jordanian army said on Friday that units on the country's eastern border shot down a drone carrying weapon parts from Syria.

Border guards, in coordination with other security agencies, spotted the drone and downed it on Jordan's side of the border, an army statement said.

The drone was found to be carrying weapons parts, the army said, adding that it will continue to deal with "any threat to our borders, and any attempt to destabilize the security of the country and terrorize its people."

Unemployed Palestinian youths fall prey to people smugglers and lose lives on 'death boats'

RAMALLAH: Palestinians were among the migrants whose boat sank in deep waters about 50 miles from the Greek coastal town of Pylos on Wednesday.

At least 80 migrants lost their lives in the shipwreck. Rescuers scoured the seas off Greece on Thursday as hopes of survivors dwindled and fears grew that hundreds more, including children, may have drowned inside the crowded fishing vessel's hold.

Reports suggest that between 400 and 750 people had packed the fishing boat, which departed the Libyan port of Tobruk and capsized and sank early in the morning.

Lebanese protesters attack banks after parliament again fails to elect president

BEIRUT: Protesters vandalized the facades of several banks and set tires alight in a suburb about 8 km east of Beirut on Thursday, frustrated at being denied access to their money.

The attacks targeted branches of Bank Audi, Bank of Beirut and Byblos Bank in Sin El-Fil in Mount Lebanon Governorate. Soldiers and internal security forces were deployed at several banks in Beirut out of fear of similar attacks.