

FULL WHAT'S ON GUIDE TO LOCAL EVENTS: See Inside

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European Union rescue ships head for Libya

BRITISH and German warships made ready to sail for waters off Libya as Europe ramped up rescue operations in the Mediterranean after up to 900 desperate migrants drowned last weekend on a boat heading for Italy.

Yet hours after European Union leaders agreed in Brussels on Thursday to treble funding for EU maritime missions and pledged more ships and aircraft, 14 clandestine migrants were killed when a train ploughed into dozens of Somalis and Afghans making

their way in darkness along a rail track in a Macedonian gorge.

The incident highlighted the variety of routes that growing numbers are taking to escape war and poverty in Asia, Africa and the Middle East and chance their luck in a wealthy region that offers, at best, a chilly welcome. EU governments remain deeply at odds over how to share out the care of those who make it.

After the sinking of a packed fishing vessel last weekend nearly doubled the death toll at sea this year to almost

2,000, EU leaders responded to a public outcry by reversing sharp cuts in search and rescue operations -- though voters' wariness of immigration means few are willing to take in many more refugees.

Britain's helicopter-carrying flagship *Bulwark*, currently near Istanbul, will head for the area between Libya and Italy on Sunday, the government said.

Prime Minister David Cameron stressed when he offered it on Thursday that few of those rescued would come to Britain.



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"The dangers of leaving the European Union" See Page 4