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Spanish women decry macho culture, domestic violence with first national strike

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Women in Spain are poised to stage their first nationwide strike on International Women's Day on 8 March as they demand an end to unfair wages, domestic violence and the

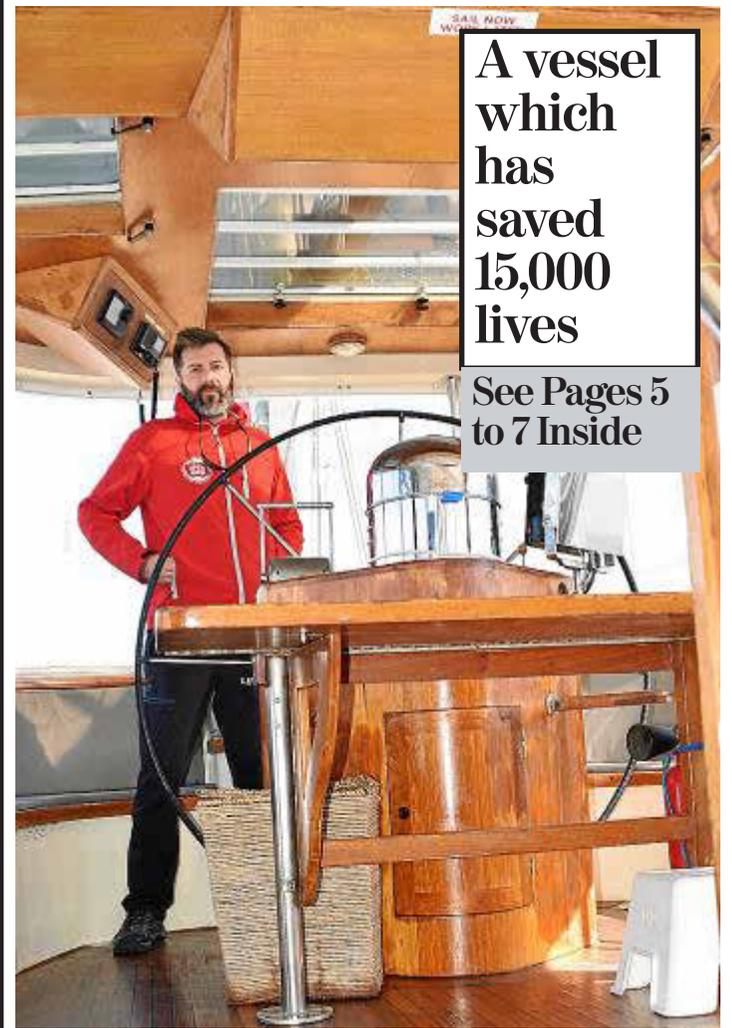


country's prevailing “macho” culture. The walk-out aims to highlight discrimination, harassment and violence against Spanish women, which the organisers see as a product of macho attitudes. The 8M Commission, the umbrella collective organising the strike, has demanded authorities take a tougher stance on domestic violence in Spain, where 99 women were killed by their partners last year. The organisers have also urged women to halt the “invisible” tasks that they often perform, such as taking children to school or cooking meals, and that they said go mostly unrecognised. “We believe that the world does not work without us, without our domestic and care work, without our purchases

and without our labour,” 8M Commission said in its manifesto. The group called for measures to reduce precarious work conditions and improve wages for Spanish women. They earn about 15 percent less per hour relative to their male counterparts, a survey by the European Commission showed. Women staged strikes in dozens of cities across Spain last year, but this will be the first nationwide walkout. The strike is expected to draw teachers, journalists, healthworkers and politicians, including Madrid's Mayor Manuela Carmena and her Barcelona counterpart Ada Colau. Similar strikes are planned in other countries - including Britain, Poland and Ireland - as the movement for women's rights continues to gain momentum around the world.

One in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence, mostly by someone they know, according to the United Nations organisation UN Women.

The Sunday interviews



A vessel which has saved 15,000 lives

See Pages 5 to 7 Inside

The rising star of Spanish politics



See interview: Inside