



A mother and her daughter arrive in port after being rescued Sunday from a sunken ferry off the Indonesian coast

—Reuters

# Hundreds rescued after Indonesian ferry sinks

JAKARTA (AFP) — Rescuers on Sunday desperately hunted for survivors in the waters off Indonesia’s Sumatra island after a ferry sank in stormy seas, killing at least 29 people, officials said.

Nearly 250 people were pulled from the sea after the Dumai Express went down on Sunday morning in heavy rain and huge swells off Karimun island, near Singapore, in the northern part of the Indonesian archipelago.

“There were a total of 291 people on board the ferry,” Rustam Pakaya, head of the health ministry’s crisis centre, told AFP. “The information we have is 29 people have died and 245 have been saved. This means 17 are still missing.”

Overloading is common on vessels that ply the waters between the vast country’s thousands of islands. The 147-tonne vessel had a capacity of 273 passengers and crew.

Fishermen were among the first on the

scene and pulled many of the survivors to safety, officials said.

“I saw children running here and there on the ferry as they tried to escape but there weren’t enough life jackets,” a survivor told TVOne.

Officials feared some of the missing may have been trapped below deck, such was the speed at which the vessel sank.

“Strong waves hit the ferry and caused the front part to crack. Water got in and within half an hour it sank,” navy Lieut.-Col. Edwin told AFP.

“The ferry is underwater. We know its position but we have yet to check inside to see if there’s anyone trapped.”

Search and rescue efforts were suspended overnight, he said, and were to continue at first light today.

Indonesia’s 234 million people are spread across 17,000 islands and are heavily dependent on a network of ships and boats, which have a poor safety record.

Ferry disasters are common despite repeated official promises to tighten and enforce safety regulations.

Corruption is a major problem, with ships selling more tickets than they should and packing ferries with cargo in addition to passengers.

An investigation is underway to determine if overloading contributed to Sunday’s accident, sea transport director-general Sunaryo said.

“If it was overloaded, that’s against the rules and we won’t tolerate that,” he said.

“We will investigate if the ferry was fit to sail and if its documents were complete. We’ll also check whether the ship’s captain and port master went ahead despite the bad weather or if the weather changed.”

Navy spokesperson Iskandar Sitompul said the vessel sank after being hit by waves as high as three metres, but other officials said the waves were towering up to six metres.

# Britain cleans up after floods

LONDON (AFP) — Clean-up efforts were underway Sunday in flood-hit towns following the heaviest downpours ever recorded in England, as fears mounted for a woman thought swept into a swollen river in Wales.

Some 314 millimetres of rain fell in 24 hours — the highest level since records began — over Cumbria as torrential rains swept across Britain and Ireland.

The Environment Agency said 65 flood warnings were in force across England and Wales, with four severe warnings in Cumbria in northwest England, the area hardest hit.

About 60 people were still sheltering in reception centres and more than 700 properties remained without power.

An urgent safety review of Cumbria’s 1,800 bridges was under way with emergency services warning one bridge in the coastal town of Workington could collapse at any time. The Calva Bridge’s closure cut



—Getty Images

A woman looks at the River Nith that burst its banks in Dumfries, Scotland, on Sunday

off the north side of the town.

“We have concerns about people who have not got prescriptions, medication; the medical centre is down to its last nappies for babies,” said Tony Cunningham, MP

for Workington. “I spoke to residents. . . . They are distraught at what’s happening. My major concern is residents who are cut off. Things are getting desperate.”

The floods in Cumbria and southern Scotland are expected to trigger insurance claims of \$82 million to \$165 million US, the Association of British Insurers said.

Meanwhile, a search was underway for a woman believed to have been swept away by the swollen River Usk in Brecon, south Wales, late on Saturday.

“A member of the public called the police when they saw what happened,” said Insp. Alun Samuel of Dyfed-Powys police.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown surveyed the grim aftermath on a visit Saturday to the badly hit Cumbria town of Cockermouth, with houses filled with muddy water, silt and sludge carpeting the roads and cars left awkwardly where the floods left them.

## WORLD

# IN BRIEF

### Chinese mine explosion deadly

HEGANG, China (Reuters) — The death toll from China’s latest coal mine disaster reached 92 on Sunday, state television said, and hopes dimmed that more survivors would emerge after a gas blast at a colliery in the nation’s far northeast.

Chinese television news said 528 workers were in the mine at Hegang in Heilongjiang province when the blast erupted in the early hours of Saturday, and 420 had been rescued by Sunday. Some 16 miners remained trapped or unaccounted for, the news broadcast said.

### Failed bombing targeted Belfast

BELFAST (AFP) — A massive car bomb that failed to explode properly was designed to cause widespread destruction in Belfast, police said Sunday, underscoring the threat to Northern Ireland’s fragile peace.

The car, containing a 180-kilogram device, crashed through barriers outside a police headquarters in Belfast late on Saturday and partially exploded, police said.

Elsewhere, police exchanged shots with paramilitaries in a border village. Three people have been arrested in Northern Ireland and one across the border in the Republic of Ireland, police said.

### Senate to debate health care

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — U.S. President Barack Obama’s health-care overhaul plan has cleared an important Senate hurdle but lawmakers warned Sunday of challenges ahead in winning support for its passage, even among Obama’s own Democrats.

On Saturday, Senate Democrats gathered the 60 votes needed to open floor debate on the plan, which would make the biggest changes in the \$2.5-trillion health-care system in 40 years. It is the Obama administration’s top domestic policy initiative.

No Republicans backed the procedural motion and a handful of conservative Democrats, whose votes were crucial, supported the floor debate but remained uncommitted to the bill itself.

Q.B. No. 1461 of 2009

### IN THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH JUDICIAL CENTRE OF SASKATOON

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES'  
CREDITORS ARRANGEMENT ACT, R.S.C.  
1985, c. C-36, AS AMENDED (the "CCAA")

AND IN THE MATTER OF A PROPOSED PLAN  
OF ARRANGEMENT FOR THE CREDITORS OF  
BIG SKY FARMS INC., DRY CAST SYSTEMS  
INC. and BIG SKY MANAGEMENT CONSULTING  
CORP. (collectively "Big Sky")

Take notice that Big Sky commenced proceedings under the CCAA on November 10, 2009 and was granted an *ex parte* order of the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan (the "Initial Order").

The Initial Order granted Big Sky various relief, including, *inter alia*, imposing a stay of proceedings against the creditors in respect to Big Sky and its assets, appointing Ernst & Young Inc. as Monitor, and providing Big Sky an opportunity to prepare and file a plan of arrangement or compromise for the consideration of its creditors and other stakeholders.

Pursuant to the Initial Order, Big Sky is to carry on business in a manner consistent with the commercially reasonable preservation of its respective business and assets.

The Initial Order has been posted on the Monitor's website: [www.ey.com/ca/bigskyfarms](http://www.ey.com/ca/bigskyfarms)

Creditors requiring further information, not made available on the website, should contact:

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Monitor:                 | Applicant:             |
| Sean MacNeil             | Accounts Payable Dept. |
| Ernst & Young Inc.       | Big Sky Farms          |
| P.O. Box 10101           | P.O. Box 610           |
| 700 West Georgia Street  | 10333 8th Street       |
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Join The StarPhoenix & The Saskatoon Co-op in welcoming "The Baby Block... the Babies of 2009!" It's our annual special section, to be published in The StarPhoenix on Saturday, January 9, 2010.

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To have your photo returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Clearly print the baby's name on the back of the photo, and we'll mail it back to you. If you have a digital photo and would like to e-mail it to us, we'll be happy to discuss our technical requirements with you.

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