Ukrainians Taken Hostage

July 23, 2013

Kidnappers in Libya have demanded a $9.5 million ransom for 19 Ukrainian crew members from a ship seized in the port of Benghazi, a news report said Tuesday. A group of armed Libyan men seized the 8,500 ton Saint Kitts and Nevis–flagged cargo ship Etel on July 19 after it arrived in Benghazi carrying a load of cars. The kidnappers have now demanded a $9.5 million ransom from the ship's owners, Odessa–based Tomex, the Kommersant Ukraine newspaper reported Tuesday, citing anonymous sources.

A representative of the Ukrainian ambassador in Libya declined to give details about the case, only telling Kommersant the authorities "are in talks with those who seized the ship," adding that the crew was out of danger and no one had been injured.

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