

# Greek officials say 2 missing boys died trapped in an elevator

THESSALONIKI, Greece: Two young brothers whose disappearance prompted a nationwide alert died of starvation and dehydration when they became trapped in a broken elevator in an empty building, authorities said Friday.

A coroner concluded that 6-year-old Aihan and 8-year-old Amet Ceribasi had survived for up to five days in the elevator before dying, hospital officials said.

Authorities issued a nationwide alert for the brothers after they disappeared in the north-eastern city of Orestiada on May 28.

Police later arrested and jailed their father and another couple on suspicion of having sold the boys, who were two of about 10 siblings.

Late Thursday, a woman alerted police about to a strong smell coming from a newly constructed but empty apartment building near where the boys disappeared. Authorities found the brothers' bodies in an elevator stuck between the second and third floor.

Regional police chief Christos Nikolopoulos

said the boys were found naked but bore no visible injuries. A small window on the elevator door had been broken, and the boys' shorts and shoes were found on the floor outside, he said.

Police believe the children broke the window and threw their clothes out in an attempt to attract the attention of anyone entering the building.

It was not immediately clear how they had become trapped in the elevator.

## Greek authorities say easyCruise ship runs aground

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — A cruise ship ran aground inside the port of the Aegean island of Syros on Friday with 353 passengers and 105 crew on board, Greek authorities said. No injuries or damage were reported.

The Merchant Marine Ministry, which handles rescue efforts at sea, said the Maltese-flagged ship from the budget easyCruise line ran aground on a sandy part of the port.

The ministry said the easyCruise Life was not damaged, and a tug boat removed it from the sandy spit. The ship tied up at another part of the port for a full damage inspection and was then expected to continue its cruise, the ministry said.

EasyCruise said in a statement that the easyCruise Life had tied up safely in the port of Syros on the last day of a seven-day Aegean island cruise.

The passengers had disembarked, and scheduled island tours were not disrupted. "The cruise is expected to continue normally," it said.

# Legendary boat goes for gold again



**ATHENS:** A ship modelled on the legendary Argo, which carried Jason and the 50 Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece, has set sail from the central Greek city of Volos on a two-month journey to Venice.

## Video footage shows kidnapped Greek businessman is alive

Thessaloniki. The kidnapers of the Greek businessman Georgios Milonas act like professionals, the Greek Ta Nea writes.

The 49-year-old president and executive director of the Greek aluminium company Alumil and chairman of the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece was abducted by three armed attackers on June 9th in Thessaloniki. A ransom of EUR 30 million has been demanded.

According to information, which was not confirmed by the police, the abductors left a videotape of the industrialist in a Thessaloniki church. The footage shows Milonas saying that he is OK, the Ta Nea notes.

The paper comments that this kidnapping does not have a connection with similar crimes committed in Greece before.

According to sources of the newspaper the abductors called the family on the telephone and told them where the videotape was left. In this way, the Ta Nea says, the kidnapers give the police different directions to avoid being caught.

It is a replica of a penteconter (a galley with one tier of 50 oars, 25 on either side) with a ram that was used to attack and sink enemy vessels.

Turkey's refusal to guarantee the 28.5-metre wooden vessel safe passage through the Bosphorus Strait means the ship will not reach its ancient predecessor's destination of Colchis, in what is modern-day Georgia at the eastern end of the Black Sea.

Its route, instead, will retrace part of the Argonauts' return trip.

One version of the legend has it that Jason and the Argonauts, while fleeing King Aites of Colchis, from whom they had stolen the Golden Fleece, sailed from the Black Sea up the Danube and then into the Sava and Ljubljanica rivers before continuing their trip on

the Adriatic and Aegean seas.

Jason is considered the founder of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. The city's coat of arms includes a dragon, which Jason was said to have slain.

The modern ship's crew includes 50 oarsmen with another 22 on standby on a following ship, said Vangelis Constantinou, a spokesman for the project.

The city of Volos had to arrange with 23 cities for the ship's overnight stay. The trip will total 1200 nautical miles (2222 kilometres) and is scheduled to end on August 12.

"The ship can only sail a maximum distance of 20 nautical miles per day," Mr Constantinou said.

The ship was built with Bronze Age replica tools, following designs for warships during the Mycenaean era.

The Argonauts' trip is said to have taken place in the 14th century BC.

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