

Project SafeCom News and Updates

Monday, 6 June 2016

Subscribe and become a member here: <http://www.safecom.org.au/ref-member.htm>

1. Europe needs a Tony Abbott-style approach to stopping the boats, says Tory MEP
2. West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag artists pressured paint over mural in Darwin CBD
3. Former refugee boats now sail on calmer waters in Amsterdam
4. Refugee takes David and Goliath fight to News Corp
5. Hundreds of detention centre abuses go unreported
6. Manus Island's future: Tensions growing between locals and asylum seekers
7. Manus Island rape claims: Censored report shows Immigration Department 'hiding something', MP says
8. MEDIA RELEASE: Nauruan police arrest asylum seeker on trumped-up charges
9. Last Nauru refugee in Cambodian resettlement program set to lose Australian assistance

1. Europe needs a Tony Abbott-style approach to stopping the boats, says Tory MEP

Sydney Morning Herald
June 3, 2016 - 4:01AM
Latika Bourke

Europe needs to take an Australian approach to stemming the flow of migrant boats, including embracing boat turnbacks, a prominent Conservative politician says, after two vessels recently arrived in the English Channel.

The Conservative Party's Daniel Hannan, who is a British member of the European Parliament, or an MEP, told Fairfax Media Mr Abbott's policy needed to be replicated in the northern hemisphere.

"I think Australia handled that issue with amazing success, there hasn't been a single death by drowning since the boats started being turned back," Mr Hannan said.

"And we need to break the link between getting onto a rickety boat and being allowed to stay in the country destination, it really is that simple."

Asked whether that meant turning back boats, Mr Hannan, a former aide to ex-Foreign secretary William Hague, said "yes, you have to break that link."

"Europe hasn't started to understand what Australia did," he added.

The UNHCR says there have been 205,287 arrivals by sea in 2016 and 1,015,078 people made a voyage in 2015.

2,510 migrants have died or are missing. 79 per cent of all arrivals come from the world's top 10 refugee producing countries with 62 per cent coming from war-torn Syria and Afghanistan.

Mr Hannan said he met Mr Abbott, whom he described as a "great man" who was "badly treated" by his party during the former prime minister's visit to London earlier this year.

It was Mr Abbott's second trip to Britain since his ousting as prime minister. Last October, Mr Abbott delivered the Margaret Thatcher lecture in London. In that speech he urged Europe to study the Australian experience and shut the door to people "no longer fleeing a conflict but seeking a better life."

"This means turning boats around, for people coming by sea... It will require some force," he said.

"It will gnaw at our consciences – yet it is the only way to prevent a tide of humanity surging through Europe and quite possibly changing it forever," Mr Abbott said at the time.

Mr Hannan said the spike in migration to Europe was partly the result of Australia's policy towards asylum seekers.

"One of the reasons why there is the level of migration in Europe there now is because the Australian route was closed off and people from Bangladesh and so on are now coming on the much longer overland route to Europe because that's the alternative to getting into Australia," he said.

Mr Hannan said he was a supporter of "controlled economic migration."

"[But] Are we going to contract that decision out to the people smugglers in the Mediterranean or are we going to have some system that we decide who gets the places?" he said.

Britain's Border Force has ordered extra patrol vessels after two boats were detected trying to reach England by the English Channel. The most recent boat, carrying 18 Albanians and two Britons who were charged, was picked up off Dymchurch just before midnight on Saturday night.

Immigration Minister James Brokenshire says the UK and French governments are collaborating on "returns" to deter migrants from making the "perilous journey across the Channel."

UKIP's only sitting MP, Douglas Carswell, said while he didn't want to comment specifically on the arrival of the boats, England needed to look to Australia for guidance on the issue.

"Clearly we need to learn the lesson from Australia which is that if you want to stop tragedies at sea you've got to stop the boats," he said.

"I think its been 19 months since a boat landed up in Australia, I think there are lessons for us to learn from Australia but I'm not going to jump on the bandwagon of these particular two boats," Mr Carswell said.

Speaking to the The Conversation's Michelle Grattan on Thursday, Tony Abbott said his government's achievements were a "great record" for the prime minister [Malcolm Turnbull] to build on.

"There's no doubt we can go to the people at this election with a very strong record of achievement," he said.

"The boats are stopped, no-one thought we could do that," Mr Abbott said.

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/europe-needs-a-tony-abbottstyle-approach-to-stopping-the-boats-says-tory-mep-20160602-gpaggg.html>

2. West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag artists pressured paint over mural in Darwin CBD

ABC News Online
By Stephanie Zillman
Posted Sat 4 Jun 2016, 2:47pm

The artists who painted a mural depicting the West Papuan "Morning Star" flag on a wall in Darwin's CBD has been by the property owners to paint over it as a "matter of urgency" following the application of "external pressures".

In an email obtained by the ABC, an employee for Randazzo Properties told a representative from the artist group that the owners of the wall wanted the mural to be painted over this weekend and had contacted the neighbouring property owner to allow access.

"Due to some external pressures I have been asked to see the wall painted out as a matter of urgency and have started putting things in place," the Randazzo Properties employee stated in the email.

Activists from Australians for a Free West Papua told the ABC they had been told by the same Randazzo Properties employee that the "external pressure" was the Indonesian consulate in Darwin.

The Indonesian Consul in Darwin, Andre Siregar, said while he had not been in contact with the wall's owner, he had written to the Northern Territory Government in August 2015 to register his opposition to the depiction of the West Papuan flag.

Mr Siregar said he acknowledged "freedom of expression" in Australia, but that the mural's close physical proximity to both the office of the Indonesian Consulate and to Parliament House had raised questions from visiting Indonesian officials over the level of support in Australia for the West Papuan Independence movement.

Mr Siregar said he believed there were about "two people" in Darwin who supported the West Papuan Independence movement.

Artists defiant as they apply anti-graffiti paint to mural

One of the mural's artists, June Mills, said that the wall had been used by different artists over the years with a variety of messages.

As a Larrakia elder, Ms Mills said the mural had been designed to show solidarity between the people of West Papua and Aboriginal people.

"This mural has been painted out of respect and love and solidarity with the West Papuan people," Ms Mills said.

"People cannot raise the West Papuan flag in West Papua — they are killed, or if not killed, jailed, or severely punished in some form.

"So we've painted the flag here, in solidarity with the Aboriginal flag — we are both recognising the struggle, and the real issue is they want that gone, because they don't want the message out, they're suppressing the information about what is happening in West Papua."

Ms Mills said the mural was first painted in June 2015, and she believed the sudden urgency around the removal of the mural was due to an upcoming conference hosted by Charles Darwin University. The Understanding Indonesia conference will host academics, researchers, teachers, and students of different disciplines to discuss new information and recent developments concerning Indonesia.

The ABC has contacted Randazzo Properties for comment. On Saturday afternoon a group of activists had assembled at the mural to protest its removal.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-04/pressure-to-paint-over-west-papuan-flag-mural-in-darwin-cbd/7477968>

3. Former refugee boats now sail on calmer waters in Amsterdam

dutchnews.nl
May 9, 2016

A cruise around Amsterdam's canals is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the city. Graham Dockery took a different sort of tour of the city's waterways, on a boat which had carried asylum seekers to Sicily.

'My name is Sami and I came here from Eritrea,' our tour guide tells us. 'Before I made it here, I spent a year in a Libyan jail for nothing, just for being a refugee.' Sami himself is not here, but his story is one of many told to us by our guide Stacyan, as we sail through Amsterdam on a boat that used to carry desperate migrants across the Mediterranean to a new life in Europe.

As we cruise along the city's idyllic canals, Stacyan tells the story of Amsterdam through the eyes of its immigrants and outsiders. With over 180 nationalities living here, there are plenty of stories to tell.

The boat we sail on is a small fishing craft which was picked up by the Italian coast guard south of Sicily with 76 migrants on board. The Dutch authorities declared it to be unfit to carry more than fourteen passengers.

Service

'When the Dutch inspectors first saw it, they took one look and said no,' said Sahand, an Iranian-born actor and Stacyan's fellow tour guide.

Eventually the six-metre long boat was deemed fit for service, but could not operate along the same routes used by Amsterdam's established canal tour companies. Sahand doesn't mind though.

'The beauty of this project is that while Amsterdam is so shiny, we dive into some issues that aren't so clean. Most tour companies talk about the Golden Age of the Netherlands and point out the old buildings. We talk about the immigrants who built them.'

Ownership

Our nameless boat is one of two used by non-profit tour company Lampedusa in Amsterdam. Lampedusa also organises tours on a larger vessel, the Meneer Vrijdag. Both were sourced from Italy by the company's director, Teun Castelein.

The boats had been impounded on the Italian island of Lampedusa, a tiny rock 205km south of Sicily and just over 100km east of Tunisia. Castelein was given the boats, but faced some issues with paperwork.

'We don't know who the owners are,' he told DutchNews.nl. 'The Italians needed the proper documentation, but the smugglers aren't going to come forward and say "hey, this is my boat!"'

The smaller vessel was found with no captain. A diving mask was on board, which led the Italians to suspect that whoever was in charge put on scuba gear and bailed before the coast guard intercepted the craft.

A risky invitation

The journey from North Africa to Italy has claimed countless lives. In just one case last year, a boat carrying migrants sank near Lampedusa, killing an estimated 800 passengers. In the first four months of 2015, about 1,600 migrants died on the Libya-Lampedusa crossing, prompting the Wall Street Journal to call the passage 'the deadliest migrant route in the world'.

Previously, the Italian authorities had set up a search and rescue programme called Mare Nostrum (Our Sea in Latin). The programme saved an estimated 130,000 lives before it was shut down in late 2014.

Critics claimed planned search and rescue operations create 'unintended pull factor[s]', encouraging more migrants to attempt the dangerous sea crossing and thereby leading to more tragic and unnecessary deaths'

Peaceful Waters

Our afternoon journey through Amsterdam is decidedly less risky. The sky is clear, the water is calm and spring blossom blows from the streets into the water.

'There's a sort of contrast there,' said Castelein. 'These boats are a symbol of tragedy, but when you see them they're quite romantic. Beyond the obvious statement they make, it's really relaxed.'

Even with fourteen people on board, the boat feels a little cramped. The 76 migrants who set out for Italy on the craft had to endure three days packed together on the open sea.

Storytelling

On board, Stacyan holds the passengers' attention with stories of the city's immigrant past and present. She talks about neighbourhoods built by Italian immigrants, the plight of the city's Jews during World War 2, and the acceptance that the gay community found in Amsterdam.

Stacyan is a trained actor, and her performance draws attention from curious onlookers relaxing on the canal banks. Although born to Jamaican immigrants, she considers herself Dutch through and through.

'Some of the stories are completely true to life, while some are exaggerated,' she told DutchNews.nl. 'They're so much fun to rehearse though, and they're written so well that you can really feel the soul of each character.'

Lampedusa's guides are all trained by a theatre production company. Teun Castelein sees the tours as part sightseeing, and part performance. 'People see these nice hippy-looking boats and want to join us,' he said. 'Then we tell them the story behind it.'

Sailing Onward

After the two-hour tour, we pull up at a dock on the bank of the river IJ. For Stacyan, Sahand, Teun and the crew, it's their boat's first successful voyage. For our captain though, it's no big deal. Abdul is a Syrian sailor more used to commanding giant container ships than tiny canal boats.

After leaving Syria three years ago, he had to apply for a licence to drive a tour boat in Amsterdam. 'After he got his diploma, they told him that he should be teaching the class,' said Sahad.

'This project gives refugees the opportunity to work,' Castelein explains after the tour. 'If it becomes a success, then Abdul has a job. That's what I like.'

'My goal is to keep employing newcomers, and take people on a journey through the canals and talk about immigration.'

<http://www.dutchnews.nl/features/2016/05/former-refugee-boats-now-sail-on-calmer-waters-in-amsterdam/>

4. Refugee takes David and Goliath fight to News Corp

The Age
June 2, 2016 - 5:23PM

"ISLAM MUST CHANGE", screamed the Herald Sun headline, and Muslim refugee Aladdin Sisalem - no stranger to conflict with News Corp Australia - took action.

On Thursday, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal held a special hearing to consider Mr Sisalem's charge that the Herald Sun, and by extension the Herald and Weekly Times, had breached Victoria's Racial and Religious Tolerance Act by publishing the story.

Mr Sisalem was previously known as the "forgotten man", after he spent 10 months as the only detainee on Manus Island in 2003 and 2004, with only a cat called Honey and guards and staff for company, as John Howard's Pacific Solution withered.

He represented himself with the assistance of translator Laurice Erian and argued that Herald Sun political editor Ellen Whinnett's front-page story had incited hatred of Muslims and Islam itself.

"When I saw this article I thought: 'Isn't there a law in Australia that stops this happening?'," Mr Sisalem told the tribunal.

"Accusation, after accusation, after accusation, on the front page."

Ms Whinnett's story, the tribunal was told, had been sparked by a Sky News political panel interview of Coalition front bencher Josh Frydenberg in the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks in November 2015.

Mr Frydenberg had told Sky News that: "I would say there is a problem within Islam."

The next day, Ms Whinnett's report expanded on the theme, quoting "war hero" MP Andrew Hastie as saying Islam must "reform".

"Modern Islam needs to cohere with the Australian way of life, our values and institutions. In so far as it doesn't, it needs reform," Mr Hastie said.

Victorian MP Michael Sukkar was quoted as saying Islam contained "medieval teachings and practices".

Ms Whinnett gave evidence to the tribunal that her story was a "significant and legitimate piece of political reporting" about "the tensions between the views of various members of the government".

Mr Sisalem disagreed, saying the story would "turn people against each other".

"This is not about personal feelings, this is about personal safety," he said. "[It's] creating war against Islam."

Mr Sisalem argued that by attacking Islam, the organisation was attacking all Muslims.

"How can the religion exist without the people practising it? . . . don't go and incite hatred against me in the community because of my religion and my beliefs."

Barrister Haroon Hassan, acting for HWT, told the court that Ms Whinnett was a senior and respected journalist and, "in my respectful submission, the article is no more than a robust piece of political reporting".

"At times people will disagree [with the media]," he said. But "mere disagreement, or even the taking of grave offence by an individual or group of individuals does not amount to vilification."

Mr Sisalem was the subject of more robust reporting from News Corp earlier this year, when its tabloids reported on his battle at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to retain his disability support pension.

Mr Sisalem's pension was cut because he was spending too much time outside Australia, and he was described in News Corp articles as "a jet-setting invalid pensioner" and a "poster-boy for asylum-seeker activists".

VCAT member Julie Grainger said she wasn't being asked to decide whether the Herald Sun story was factual, but whether it breached religious vilification laws.

"It's not relevant whether I think it was a balanced article or a fair article," Ms Grainger said.

"I am confined to looking at the wording . . . of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act and making a finding of fact as to whether the article in question incites hatred against, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule in this case of people of the Muslim faith."

She will hand down her finding at a later date.

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/refugee-takes-david-and-goliath-fight-to-news-corp-20160602-gpa1ag.html>

5. Hundreds of detention centre abuses go unreported

Sydney Morning Herald
June 5, 2016 - 4:00PM
Bianca Hall and Noel Towell

Asha was only 12 months old when she pulled over a container of boiling water on Nauru, severely scalding herself.

Under Australian law, her injuries should have been investigated by workplace safety authority Comcare but - like hundreds of other injuries, assaults and even deaths on the immigration department's watch over two years - it was not reported to the authority.

Documents provided to Fairfax Media show that Comcare, which is responsible for the health and safety of all people in Australian government workplaces, including workers and detainees in mainland and offshore detention centres, has not investigated abuse and injuries on a vast scale.

Reams of internal Comcare and Department of Immigration and Border Protection documents - released to the Australian Lawyers' Alliance (ALA) under freedom of information laws - paint a damning picture of what the ALA calls under-reporting of safety breaches "at best", and concealment at worst.

They show that of 1092 injuries, and assaults reported to Comcare by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and its contractors over two years, almost 850 went uninvestigated.

Comcare is required to investigate so-called "notifiable incidents" and to put in place measures to improve safety based on those investigations. But the ALA claims Comcare takes a narrow view of the sort of incidents it should investigate in detention centres.

A Comcare spokesman said the Department of Immigration and Border Protection was only required to notify the authority about "deaths, serious injury or dangerous incidents", and that sexual assault may not be seen as serious enough to warrant a Comcare investigation.

"Incidents of self-harm and sexual assault, for example, may not satisfy the definition of a notifiable incident," the spokesman said.

DIBP told a Senate inquiry last year that Australian workplace laws applied to offshore detention facilities. But the Comcare spokesman said the question of who had "actual control and management" of the facilities was "complex" and was the subject of an ongoing investigation by Comcare.

The documents also allege:

- • Of 18 deaths in Australia's Immigration system between July 2013 and June 2015, only four were deemed by Immigration to be "notifiable" to health and safety authorities.
- • Comcare has not investigated a single sexual assault against a detainee in an offshore detention centre, despite many reports of rapes and other sexual assaults, including against children.
- • The agency will only investigate sexual assaults offshore that result in hospitalisation.

Comcare recently spent two months visiting every Australian detention centre, including Christmas Island, to ensure they comply with health and safety laws. But it has not visited the Manus Island and Nauru facilities this year.

The ALA says that under workplace health and safety laws, public servants and even ministers could face legal action over the failures to act.

It has recommended Comcare consider prosecuting DIBP for failing to provide safe environments in the offshore detention centres, and called for a Royal Commission to investigate the safety breaches.

Spokesman Greg Barnes said the under-reporting and lack of investigation uncovered by the ALA indicated that Comcare was reading its legislation in a very narrow sense.

"You've had 1000 incidents that were reported to Comcare by Immigration, most of which occurred in detention centres in a two-year period. And then Comcare turns around and says 845 are not notifiable," Mr Barnes said.

"For Comcare to take the view that these are not notifiable incidents under the Act is disturbing.

A Comcare spokesman denied the authority was failing to act, saying it took "a strong and effective approach to regulating work health and safety issues at immigration detention facilities, as we do with all workplaces in our jurisdiction.

"We have a number of ongoing investigations into alleged breaches of the Work Health and Safety Act at Immigration Detention Centres in Australia and at Regional Processing Centres offshore."

DIBP did not respond to a request for comment.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/hundreds-of-detention-centre-abuses-go-unreported-20160605-gpbw89.html>

6. Manus Island's future: Tensions growing between locals and asylum seekers

ABC Radio - Correspondents Report
Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek
Posted Sat 4 Jun 2016, 6:59am

Most Australians only know of Manus Island as a place where asylum seekers have been sent and have died in detention.

Manus is one of Papua New Guinea's most isolated places, in a country that is already hard to get around.

Reporting there is made harder by the sensitivities of the residents, the refugees and the many people who work at the detention centre.

The ABC's Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek thought you might want to know what Manus Island is actually like.

The one thing every Papua New Guinean wants to tell people about Manus Island is how beautiful it is.

Foreigners always note that too, but they say it as an afterthought or like they are apologising that people only know Manus Island for its detention centre, for the riots and the deaths of detainees and constant allegations of tension and cruelty.

It can be hard to get away from those things, especially when I travel to Manus Island to cover them specifically.

The residents are known as Manusians, and while I have found them to be friendly, educated and engaging, they are not always friendly with me when I want to film the detention centre, or the so-called transit centre, that some refugees stay in now.

I have been harassed while filming it from a public road some distance away — the many Manusians who work there are worried about their jobs and worried about what I might do with the vision.

I am not sure of the expat contractors' legal status enforcing immigration detention and blocking media access. One forced me to leave a motel in Port Moresby where some Manus detainees were staying temporarily, saying I had trespassed in an operational area.

He said I had to get permission from the Immigration Department. I asked Papua New Guinea's Immigration and Citizenship Advisory Service and they said no.

Requests to film the detention centre and go inside it have also been denied, so I rely on the detainees themselves for information and from other people on Manus Island.

That means at the moment, when there is so much uncertainty about the future of the centre and the fate of the men inside, it is difficult to get clear information about what is actually happening.

Supreme Court ruling changed island life

The Supreme Court decision that ruled the detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island was illegal has changed arrangements for the 900 men kept on the island.

Now, as an attempt to comply with the ruling but not close the centre, detainees have been allowed to leave and go into the main town of Lorengau.

These men have been locked up for almost three years in a tightly controlled environment. They get money by selling the cigarettes provided in the centre to locals.

I have been told Manusians have real concerns about how those men have been acting outside detention, as reports of violence and sexual predation have surfaced.

The 50 or so refugees on Manus who have been living outside the centre were predominantly getting on quite well with the locals, but they say they are now becoming targets for robbery and assault.

Manusians describe themselves as peaceful and are proud their community has fewer violent incidents than other parts of PNG, but they are unhappy so many foreigners — many of them Muslim — have been placed on Manus without consultation.

The residents of Manus Island say they have seen behaviour that is aggressive, disrespectful and culturally offensive. Several told me it is only a matter of time before there is major violent incident.

The Papua New Guinea Government says the detention centre needs to be closed, but Australia's position is PNG signed an agreement to process and resettle the men, and they need to stick to it.

No-one on Manus knows what will happen to the 900 men on the island, or how long this pressure-cooker situation will last.

So when you think of Manus, you can picture tropical islands where palm trees really do hang over the water and sway in a thick, hot breeze.

Where there are still 900 men stuck in legal limbo, and many feeling increasingly afraid of the upset locals watching them.

A place where highly paid expatriate staff fly in and out and where security contractors follow visitors around in cars to see who they're talking to.

A beautiful place of suspicion, fear and violence.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-04/manus-island-tension-rising-between-locals-and-asylum-seekers/7475364>

7. Manus Island rape claims: Censored report shows Immigration Department 'hiding something', MP says

ABC-TV - Lateline

By Jason Om

First posted Thu 2 Jun 2016, 7:54pm

Updated Fri 3 Jun 2016, 4:24am

The MP for Manus Island has accused the Federal Government of a cover-up after the Immigration Department released a largely censored report into the alleged rape of a detention centre employee.

The 68-page document obtained by Lateline under freedom of information refers to the alleged rape of the Papua New Guinean woman by three Australian security guards in July last year.

It is alleged the woman had been drinking with the Wilson security guards, when she was allegedly drugged and later found naked and unconscious in a bathroom at the security staff quarters.

A short time after, the men were stood down and returned to Australia.

In December last year, Lateline lodged a freedom of information request into the case.

Six months later, the Department released the document, however almost every page has been redacted.

The Department argued making the information public would damage Australia's relationship with Papua New Guinea.

Ronny Knight, the MP for Manus and the Vice Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry, told Lateline the Government was hiding something.

"Obviously there's something there that they're not comfortable for us to see and it's something they've got to hide," he said.

Mr Knight said the three men accused of the assault should be brought back to PNG to help with the investigation.

"I think they should bring them in and let them clear the air and if they are found culpable for it then let them take the heat for it. That should straighten up the relationship," he said.

Some of the details that can be gleaned from the FOI documents include emails recording the incident on July 15 and 16, 2015, and an email that appears to be from Transfield.

Statements were taken from four people and there appears to have been four alcohol breath tests recorded.

The documents state there was CCTV footage but the synopsis of that footage has been redacted.

A separate source close to the Papua New Guinean Government told Lateline PNG's cabinet has been given a confidential report into the matter.

However, Mr Knight said he had no idea that report existed.

"It means that both the Australian Government and the PNG Government have total disrespect for the leaders of Manus province and Manus district and our citizens take a second place in the grand scheme of things," he said.

In a statement, the Department of Immigration told Lateline that "allegations of criminal activity on Manus Island are a matter for the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary."

"The Department of Immigration and Border Protection is aware of the investigation."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-02/immigration-dept-releases-report-into-alleged-manus-island-rape/7472370>

8. MEDIA RELEASE: Nauruan police arrest asylum seeker on trumped-up charges

Sunday June 5, 2016
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul
mobile 0417 275 713

Nauruan police have arrested a 39 year-old Iranian asylum seeker, Hamid Nadaf, on trumped up charges of "threatening behaviour."

Hamid was arrested on Friday afternoon, 3 June, around 4pm, near the family compound RPC3, and is now being held in the Nauru jail.

Hamid, his wife and eight year-old son have been in detention on Nauru since February 2014, and he has played a very active role in the daily protests in the Nauru family compound RPC3, since 20 March this year.

The police refused to allow Hamid's wife to see him yesterday, Saturday, 4 June and have told his wife that he will be held and brought before the court on 13 June.

Asylum seekers and refugees on the island see his arrest as a clear case of victimisation and an attempt to stifle the daily protests that have spread to refugee compounds across the island. Today will be the 78th day of protest in the family camp. (Photo of Saturday's protest, 77 days, in the family camp attached.)

Protests on Nauru yesterday declared that Hamid was innocent and called for his release. (Videos available on request.)

Police say they are acting on a complaint by a Nauruan citizen who felt 'threatened' when they read the contents of a letter that supposedly fell from Hamid's pocket when he was riding a motor-bike on Friday.

The supposed letter has not been disclosed and in any case Hamid is not able to write in English.

Hamid's arrest seems to be part of new police tactic to intimidate the protests, now that "attempting suicide" is no longer a criminal offence.

An Iraqi man was arrested, in similar circumstances to Hamid's, on 6 May, on the basis of a complaint to Nauruan police that the man had made threats to "set fire" or 'make an explosion' on Nauru.

"Hamid's arrest has angered asylum seekers and refugees on the island and has ensured the protests will grow louder and spread further," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"It has also exposed the lack of the rule of law on Nauru, with the police acting as an unaccountable extension of the Nauruan and Australian governments. Hamid and the Iraqi man should be freed immediately."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

9. Last Nauru refugee in Cambodian resettlement program set to lose Australian assistance

ABC News Online
By Southeast Asia correspondent Liam Cochrane
Posted Fri 3 Jun 2016, 5:11am

The last refugee left in Australia's \$55 million resettlement program in Cambodia has been told he will soon be cut off from Australian-funded assistance.

Mohammed Roshid says he has been left sick, isolated and despairing about the future.

Australia pledged \$15.5 million to help resettle refugees in Cambodia and has already paid about \$2.5 million to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The funds paid to IOM are in addition to Australia's pledge of \$40 million in development aid to Cambodia in order to secure the resettlement deal.

But the support services are only meant to last for 12 months.

"They contract for me one year [and it's] just finished six to seven months now," said Mohammed Roshid, 26.

"After, I don't know [whether] they help me [or] they do not help me — they already tell they do not help for me," he told the ABC in Phnom Penh.

IOM declined to discuss Mr Roshid's case, citing privacy reasons, but released a statement about the general arrangements in Cambodia.

"IOM will assess the individual circumstances of each refugee and make a case-by-case determination on whether settlement support services should continue after one year," said an emailed statement.

Last man standing

Mr Roshid is the last refugee still in the resettlement program, after three Iranians and a Myanmar man decided to go back to the countries they fled.

Mr Roshid said goodbye to the other remaining refugee, an Iranian man named Daniel, a few weeks ago.

"When he gone I have a feeling it's no good ... but he didn't like [Cambodia], it's not safe for them," said Mr Roshid.

He said unlike the other refugees who gave Cambodia a try, he was stateless and could not return home.

"Wherever you want to go you can go, but I cannot go. I don't have, in my country, I don't have citizen(ship)," he said.

Mr Roshid is a Rohingya Muslim, which is an ethnic group the Myanmar Government does not officially recognise.

More than 120,000 Rohingyas are kept in camps in western Myanmar, and subjected to apartheid-like policies that restrict their movement and who they can marry.

Mr Roshid had hoped life would be better in Cambodia, but he said he was sick and frustrated by the poor medical treatment he receives at the local hospital arranged by IOM.

He spent several months sleeping in the IOM office but now rents a room out of town for \$70 a month.

He currently gets an allowance and has access to a range of resettlement services provided by IOM.

"Services provided will depend on the individual's particular need, but primarily include medical, counselling, employment services, accommodation and language training," said the IOM statement.

The Australian Government told the ABC about \$2.5 million had been paid to IOM so far.

But there could be more soon, with reports in the Cambodian media of two Iranian refugees on Nauru considering resettlement in Phnom Penh.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-03/nauru-refugee-in-cambodia-could-have-australian-funding-cut/7472966>