

Project SafeCom News and Updates

Thursday, 23 November 2017

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1. LONG READ: Decay, despair, defiance: inside the Manus Island refugee camp

Special report: Abandoned by Australia, the men in the former detention centre survive on smuggled rations and scant light
by Ben Doherty on Manus Island

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Thursday 16 November 2017 12.09 AEDT

Darkness descends quickly upon the Manus Island detention centre, and it is very nearly absolute. But from the shadows comes a solitary blinking light.

By the glow of his phone, Benham Satah leads the way into the Manus Island “regional processing centre”, abandoned now by both the Australian and Papua New Guinean governments, and left to ruin and the resourcefulness of those left within.

The massive steel fences that have surrounded this place for years have been in large part pulled down, but in haste, and much of the perimeter lies half-dismantled, twisted and torn. Inside is decay and despair, but also defiance.

Two weeks since the camp was shuttered and essential services withdrawn, the 400 men who remain inside are resolute in their determination to stay.

They say they have spent nearly five years living with uncertainty of indefinite detention, and they are adamant there is no possible future – no safety – for them on Manus Island.

But they survive on increasingly meagre resources.

There is a fraught underground supply chain of food and medicine coming into the camp from Manusians outside anxious to help. But it is ad hoc and vulnerable.

Phones, lifelines to the outside world, are kept charged via batteries dragged from one of the abandoned administrative blocks. Those are kept replenished by solar panels brought from another building.

The camp is rotting in the muggy tropical heat. Refugees have been pulling apart the abandoned buildings, using the timber frames as firewood so that they can cook on earth stoves.

The generators that powered the centre have been removed, and water lines cut. Other items of value and utility – fans, fridges, furniture – have been stolen by people from the surrounding military base or further outside.

The water in the jury-rigged wells the men have been dug has been deliberately spoiled. Rubbish and oil have been poured into them by PNG immigration officers sent in to encourage the men to leave.

Papua New Guinea wants to reclaim the land where until recently it allowed the men – refugees and asylum seekers – to be held on behalf of Australia, which is refusing to resettle them. PNG police have brought officers from across the country to Manus to oversee the final shutdown. Thus far there has been no force used against the men themselves, but shelters have been torn down, and pumps and pipes sabotaged so they can't be repaired.

In response, the men who remain in the camp have coalesced into an anarchic collective, cooperating to share the tasks of running the “camp” in the absence of anyone else here, and anywhere else to go.

They say the abandonment has inspired a new unity among them. It is a resilience born of new agency: after four and a half years at the whim of a capricious detention system, the men of Manus finally feel in charge of their lives again.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/16/decay-despair-defiance-inside-the-manus-island-refugee-camp>

2. Twelve former Australians of the Year condemn government and urge action on Manus

Open letter begs Australian government to restore essential services to detention centre and to let doctors treat men there

The Guardian
Helen Davidson
Thursday 23 November 2017 09.14 AEDT

Twelve former Australians of the Year have condemned the actions of the Australian government on Manus Island, as Papua New Guinean police and immigration officers entered the detention centre on Thursday morning, demanding that detainees leave.

The open letter, signed by Australians of the Year between 1983 and 2015, pleaded with the Australian government to restore essential services and allow doctors to treat the 380 men who remain inside the centre.

The situation inside the centre is deteriorating, and the letter warned it was “inevitable” that people would become sick and even die because of the lack of food and water, medical care and sanitation.

“This treatment does not represent who we are as Australians, or indeed as human beings,” said the open letter, signed by former honorees including Rosie Batty, Ita Buttrose, Patrick McGorry, Tim Flannery and Mick Dodson.

“We plead with you to immediately restore all essential services to the men on Manus Island. Please allow the Australian Medical Association to provide medical and preventive care, as they have recently offered, as soon as possible. At the same time please find safe haven for the acknowledged genuine refugees without any further delay.”

The letter also expressed concern about Australia’s international reputation on human rights. It said responsibility for the situation lay with Australia, not Papua New Guinea.

“It seems our major political parties have failed to meet the most basic obligations under the United Nations refugee convention, one that our country helped to negotiate and which we signed in 1951.”

One of the signatories, Simon McKeon, the chancellor of Monash University and former chair of AMP, said getting Australians of the Year together on an issue was a “once-in-a-blue-moon sort of thing” but they all felt strongly about the Manus crisis.

“At the end of the day my own view is that in the circles I move we well understand the reasons why governments and oppositions over a period of time have been so focused on the deterrent aspect of what we’ve done on Nauru and Manus Island,” he told Guardian Australia. “But time has gone on.”

McKeon said observing the deterrence policy over the years had left him with an understanding of it even if he didn’t fully accept it, but he was “now challenging whether that particular argument is justifying what is going at the moment, and entitling us to receive the international criticism we’re plainly getting at the moment”.

“For my part I don’t see any rational argument anymore that says not doing what the AMA is [calling for] is in any way consistent with the deterrent argument. There’s a complete disconnect there.”

The crisis at the former immigration detention centre is entering its fourth week, as human rights groups and foreign governments voice concern and outrage at the deteriorating situation.

On Wednesday PNG police said they would await the outcome of a legal appeal before conducting “Operation Helpim Friends”, which would “politely” ask the detainees to leave voluntarily. The police commissioner, Gari Baki, said no force would be used. But he added that the notorious paramilitary mobile squad would be on hand to assist.

Behrouz Boochani, a journalist and refugee inside the centre, said on Thursday the mobile squad and immigration officers had come into the camp and were “shouting at us to leave”.

He said refugees were gathering together in one compound and some had climbed on the roof.

Officers “in large numbers” were demanding the men hand over phones and stop recording their activities.

The men have said they fear for their safety in the Lorengau community, and organisations including the UN high commissioner for refugees have said the accommodation built for them is not ready or secure enough. Authorities are preventing food, water and medical care from getting to them.

In the past few weeks there have been break-ins and protests at the alternative accommodation sites, and medical emergencies inside the centre.

Last week members of the Australian Medical Association voted unanimously to call on the government to allow doctors access to the centre, to assess the men’s health and living conditions.

“The AMA has made many representations on this matter, both publicly and in private but, with a worsening and more dangerous situation emerging on Manus, the federal council strongly believes that urgent action and answers are needed,” said the AMA president, Michael Gannon.

On Wednesday the UNHCR said the humanitarian crisis was human-made and entirely preventable. It was a “damning indictment of a policy meant to avoid Australia’s international obligations”, said Nai Jit Lam, the UNHCR’s deputy regional representative in Canberra.

The Australian government has remained resolute in its policy, dismissing criticism and rejecting offers of help, including from New Zealand to take 150 refugees and to separately provide \$2.7m to PNG to provide essential services.

It has also warned New Zealand against making any deals with PNG without Australia, suggesting that would affect diplomatic relations.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/23/twelve-former-australians-of-the-year-urge-action-on-manus>

3. Australians of the Year write open letter to leaders about 'disaster' on Manus Island

Canberra Times
Thursday November 23 2017 - 7:48AM
Perry Duffin

Former Australians of the Year have penned an open letter to Malcolm Turnbull and Bill Shorten urging them to address the "human disaster" unfolding on Manus Island's decommissioned detention centre.

The letter's signatories include Rosie Batty, Ita Buttrose, Simone McKeon, Patrick McGorry, Mick Dodson, Tim Flannery, Fiona Wood, Fiona Stanley, Gustav Nossal, Peter Doherty, John Yu and Robert de Castella

In the letter, the celebrated group calls for the government to send aid to the detention centre which has been without running water and electricity for more than a week.

Hundreds of asylum seekers, detained on their way to Australia, remain inside citing concerns for their safety outside the camp.

"In the coming days, it is inevitable that people will become sick and even die through the lack of basic sanitation, food, water and medical care," the letter says.

"Please allow the Australian Medical Association to provide medical and preventive care, as they have recently offered, as soon as possible. At the same time please find safe haven for the acknowledged genuine refugees without any further delay."

The letter warns Australia's reputation on human rights is deteriorating under the "failure" of both Malcolm Turnbull's government and Bill Shorten's opposition to meet the obligations of the UN Refugee Convention.

"We believe it is time to stop the unacceptable and internationally criticised treatment of the refugees on Manus Island, who, though innocent of any crime, have been incarcerated and now abandoned there," the letter says.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/australians-of-the-year-write-open-letter-to-leaders-about-disaster-on-manus-island-20171122-gzr2qi.html>

4. 'Time for some humanity': Helen Clark calls for action on Manus Island

Newshub, New Zealand
20/11/2017
Tony Wright

Former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark has weighed in on the deteriorating situation of asylum seekers on Manus Island.

Ms Clark, who was in charge of the United Nations Development Programme for eight years, responded to an article in the New York Times, highlighting the plight of the asylum seekers by tweeting:

"Reading this nytimes article will give background to why both NZ National- & Labour-led governments offered to help resettlement. Many of those on Manus are recognised as refugees by UN. That gives them rights - among other things to protection. Time for some humanity"

The article states:

"Veteran United Nations officials said this month they had never seen a wealthy democracy [Australia] go to such extremes to punish asylum seekers and push them away.

"Papua New Guinea officials and local leaders, enraged at how the camp's closure was handled, have demanded to know why Australia is not doing more to help the men.

"Instead, Australia is cutting services reducing caseworkers and no longer providing medication, officials said, even though approximately 8 in 10 of the men suffer from anxiety disorders, depression and other issues largely caused by detention."

The plight of the refugees has seen tensions ramp up between the new Jacinda Ardern-led Government and Australia's prime minister Malcolm Turnbull.

Mr Turnbull's government has repeatedly declined New Zealand's offer to take 150 refugees from Manus Island and Nauru, saying he would first pursue a deal with the United States to resettle them, with more than 1000 being held.

In 2001, Helen Clark's government accepted 133 Afghan asylum seekers from the Norwegian container ship Tampa, which Ms Clark described as one of her proudest moments as Prime Minister.

The humanitarian crisis happened in the Indian Ocean, when Australia refused to accept the Tampa asylum seekers, who were plucked from a sinking fishing boat by the Tampa's Norwegian crew.

The standoff sparked a diplomatic row between Australia and Norway, and focused international attention on the plight of the asylum seekers.

<http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/politics/2017/11/time-for-some-humanity-helen-clark-calls-for-action-on-manus-island.html>

5. 'I cannot leave my neighbour hungry': support for refugees from priest and major on Manus

Catholic priest Father Clement Taulam and retired army major Michael Kuweh are defying both the PNG and Australian governments

The Guardian
Ben Doherty on Manus Island
Thursday 23 November 2017 04.00 AEDT

The major and the father seek salvation for the refugees of Manus Island, Papua New Guinea.

Two Manusian men – Catholic priest Father Clement Taulam and retired army major Michael Kuweh – are defying the PNG and Australian governments in calling for assistance for the refugees and asylum seekers on Manus, and for a peaceable solution to the standoff inside the condemned Australian-run detention centre.

Speaking at his Papitalai parish church on Los Negros Island, across a small bay from the detention centre, Taulam said the enforced shutdown of the centre – in which 380 men remain – had left people vulnerable and suffering.

Over years of pastoral care, he has built up friendships with many of those in the centre, he told the Guardian and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

“Now when they say they have no food, no water, no lights, they are deprived physically but they are saying too, that the physical is also spiritual for them. They are deprived of faith. They are suffering.”

Taulam said no government seemed willing to take care of the men who remain in the centre.

“Australia seems to be saying, ‘Papua New Guinea, this is your responsibility’. And Papua New Guinea is saying to Australia, ‘Do your work, clean up your mess.’ And while this is going on, these people are suffering.”

“I’ve been talking with them, going to see them. A lot of them want to go to Australia, because that was their initial intention, but it looks like Australia doesn’t want them and that’s why they put them out here to process them to other countries. We really don’t know what the outcome will be. Because right now those people are in a situation where they are really hard up and they are suffering.”

Kuweh spent decades in the PNG military, rising from an enlisted rank to become a senior officer. He trained and served alongside Australian troops for years.

He said Manusians were famously hospitable and had welcomed West Papuan refugees fleeing political violence in the 1960s. But he said Manusians were being stopped from providing food, water and medical assistance to the refugees and asylum seekers inside the detention centre.

“Five years is a gruelling experience for many, and it doesn’t sit well for us, because ... we are people of hospitality and the current situation is [that] the authorities denied us to give them [help]: ‘You can’t do that.’ Well, you can’t stop a Manusian to deliver anything.

“I cannot leave my neighbour hungry. And leaving [people] without basic needs is out of the ordinary. Whose policy is that? Inhuman, totally inhuman.”

Kuweh said Manus's reputation had been damaged internationally by media coverage of the abuses, violence and privation over nearly five years of the detention centre's operation.

"We are being sunk," he said. "Our name is being painted with all kinds of connotations. It is not good."

The situation inside the Manus Island detention centre, three weeks after it was formally shuttered, grows increasingly dire.

Water is running low and the makeshift wells dug by the men inside have been deliberately befouled by PNG immigration in an attempt to coerce the men into leaving. There is a meagre and dwindling supply of food and precious little medicine.

The fraught underground supply chain of essentials coming from Manusians outside anxious to help is ad hoc and vulnerable.

Kon Karapanagiotidis from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre said he was inspired to meet the father and the major and "to see men of such decency and integrity" taking action to ensure the men on Manus were not forgotten.

"The story of the retired major and father in of all the suffering and injustice we witnessed on Manus shows us the power of people's every day humanity and decency," he said. "These men highlight an important story that has been missed by many."

But, Karapanagiotidis said, the responsibility for assisting should not fall to Manusian citizens.

"The villains are not the local people of PNG," he said. "Many feel as much unease, disgust and distress as to what has been done to the refugees and people seeking asylum on Manus as we do. The fault lies with the Australian government."

The crux of the standoff between the refugees and asylum seekers who remain in the detention centre and the authorities who want them gone is the safety of refugees moved to the Manus community, and their opportunities for a peaceable and productive future.

Fraught relations between Manusians and the transplanted refugee and asylum seeker community have marred settlement attempts. Those inside the centre say they cannot be safe in Lorengau.

Manus Island is a small, close-knit and familial community. Almost everybody in the province is connected by the tight bonds of wantok, the tribal ties and obligations that reach across the island.

Manusians proudly boast of their island's reputation as the friendliest of PNG's provinces. The Christian values of charity and hospitality to strangers run deep here and are proudly proclaimed.

And many Manusians are empathetic towards the refugees' situation and have made significant efforts – often at great risk to themselves – to assist the men inside the centre and those seeking to make a life outside.

But there is a significant minority that resents the imposition of the new population, which is exclusively young men. Tensions, present since the centre's reopening in 2013, have been growing with the steady movement of refugees to the East Lorengau accommodation close to the township.

There have been an increasing number of violent incidents between the local and refugee populations. Refugees have been attacked with machetes and iron bars, others report having been threatened, beaten and robbed numerous times.

There is, too, tension over relations between refugees and Manusian women. Several babies have been born from these relationships, which have – in some circumstances – proven controversial in the conservative Christian community.

One asylum seeker was accused of sexual offences against an underage girl. He was charged but denied the allegations. He died before the offences came to court.

Compounding social issues, there is little physical space for refugees to go.

Ninety-seven per cent of land in PNG is held customarily by family groups and is in many cases their sole source of income and food. Refugees sent to live in Lorengau find themselves forced to squat on someone else's property and that owner is often resentful of their presence.

Other issues grate too: the refugees are seen, by some, as receiving favourable treatment. They are being housed, sometimes with air-conditioning, and given allowances for food and medical treatment, benefits not afforded to Manusians.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/23/they-say-that-manus-is-hell-seeking-salvation-among-the-standoff>

6. Behrouz Boochani: All we want is freedom – not another prison camp

Over the past four years we have become a mere subject for politicians and the media. Our human dignity has been debased and all our dreams shattered

The Guardian
Behrouz Boochani
Monday 13 November 2017 12.14 AEDT

Manus prison has reached a historic landmark. It's a culmination of years of premeditated violence and affliction. For more than 10 days hundreds of refugees have been refusing to leave the prison camp and, as a result, the situation has morphed into a large-scale humanitarian crisis. If things deteriorate further, we will witness a disaster beyond imagination.

For many who are watching from Australia or other parts of the world, particular questions have arisen, including: why are the refugees refusing to leave the camp? From the perspective of someone who has lived in this prison for more than four years and who has been critically analysing the politics of offshore processing throughout this time, I am certain that there is a misconception of the main reason behind our resistance – a misinterpretation of the principle driving the stand taken by the refugees. This mistake has both been made by people who are actively supporting the refugees and by individuals who have been indifferent toward the events in Manus and Nauru prisons all these years. And it also pertains to those who have supported the government's political strategy.

The misreading of the issue is reflected in government officials and the Australian prime minister attacking senator Nick McKim, refugee advocates, the Papua New Guinea immigration minister and a few incarcerated refugees, saying that they are encouraging and motivating the other refugees to remain in the prison camp. First, the PNG minister responded by explicitly stating that a few individuals who were "leaders" inside the prison were forcing the refugees to stay inside the detention camp.

These kinds of accusations are facile and unacceptable. It comes across as a form of degradation because it strips the refugees of agency, reducing them to children who cannot make decisions on their own. It represents them as humans who lack a decent understanding of what is unfolding around them. It degrades their dignity by assuming that the refugees cannot assess the situation.

On the other side, the refugee supporters announce that the alternative accommodation units in Lorengau, Hillside Haus and West Lorengau, are not ready yet. They also claim that Lorengau is not safe to accommodate the refugees and that the new camps do not provide medical facilities and are unsuitable for housing refugees.

All the claims made by the refugee activists and human rights organisations, such as Amnesty and Human Rights Watch, are accurate and significant. However, the central point that must never be forgotten is that for more than four years the refugees of Manus prison have been detained for no reason, incarcerated without committing any crime. During these years lives have been destroyed and many families torn apart.

The reality inside Manus prison and the reasons for the refugee resistance are totally different to what is stated in some media and claimed in official public statements. When the refugees engage in discussions, all their dialogues have one thing in common: "We won't put up with being incarcerated anymore. We have no energy left to go from this prison to another prison. We haven't committed any crime and we can't tolerate prison any longer."

All the conversations are driven by one thing, and one thing only, and that is freedom. Only freedom. Perhaps from all statements and all speeches published over the last week none of them hurt and angered the refugees more than the one by Peter Dutton where he said, "The only difference in the new centre is that where we serve three meals a day at the [detention centre], we're asking people to prepare their own meals with food supplied." Talking about the refugees in this way is a perverse manipulation of the human dimension. Dutton is basically saying that if he were to build a prison fully equipped for comfortable living, and he incarcerated people there for years, then no one would have the right to object.

This is not about the prison itself and the conditions of imprisonment. It is about freedom, and it is this point that is always forgotten or ignored. In order to understand this issue, one does not need to complicate things. It is plain and simple.

It is enough for people to imagine themselves, only for a moment, in the place of a refugee imprisoned in Manus; enough for people to imagine themselves as someone whose human dignity has been debased over these years; enough to imagine the torture this refugee has had to endure. Imagine there is nothing positive to look forward to in the future for this refugee; possibly his partner has left him; or his children have been left alone; his dreams have been shattered. He has become a mere subject for the media, a mere subject for reporters, a mere subject for photographers, a mere subject for politicians, a mere subject for human rights activists, a mere subject for intellectuals and researchers. Over these past years they have all been reinforcing a huge industry that is built on the indefinite imprisonment of this refugee. And after four and a half years they now decide to transfer him to another prison and, according to Peter Dutton's promise, provide him with three meals a day.

The issue is plain and simple. We did not come to Australia to live in a prison. The peaceful protest by refugees is not because we want to remain in this prison. We are resisting because we want freedom in a safe environment. The core concern is freedom ... only freedom. The rest of what you hear are just peripheral issues.

---->>>> Behrouz Boochani is a journalist and an Iranian refugee held on Manus Island since August 2014

---->>>> Translated by Omid Tofighian from the American University in Cairo/University of Sydney

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/13/all-we-want-is-freedom-not-another-prison-camp>

7. Mark Isaacs: 'We don't want them here if they are unhappy': simmering tensions on Manus Island

Sydney Morning Herald
November 18 2017 - 12:15AM
Mark Isaacs

In the main square of Lorengau, on Manus Island, people mill about on the street in mismatched clothing, chewing betelnut, conversing, selling produce. There is a long line on pay day at the one functioning ATM in town. Information sheets on diabetes are plastered to the bank wall.

I am met outside of my hotel in the main square by a local woman named Jill*. I'm advised to avoid the port, just a street from where I am staying, because drunks might rob me at knife-point. I'm advised to travel around the island in the company of a local to be safe.

A melted, crumpled building sags over the footpath on the main road. This used to be a supermarket owned by Chinese migrants before it was burned down with 10 people inside, including women and children. The rumour in town is that the fire was deliberately started by "out-of-towners" to cover up murder.

Jill and I walk through the town market which has a brand new roof, one of the few infrastructure projects provided to the island by the Australian government as repayment for housing Australia's unwanted boat people. Women with tribe-distinguishing tattoos on their foreheads sit on plastic mats selling fresh produce: eggplants, bananas, beans, stone fruit, cabbages, bok choy, coconuts, dirt-covered potatoes, sago palm.

Jill picks up a small green nut. "Green gold," she says.

Jill worked in the Manus Island detention centre for five years. The Project, as she calls it (identified as "The" because there have been so few projects on the island), brought jobs and some financial prosperity to Manus Island.

"There are no jobs in Manus. Usually finding employment in Manus is about who you know. We call it the wan-tok [one talk] system. You only need to talk to one person to get the job. But the Australian organisations weren't affected by nepotism," she said.

According to Jill, the prosperity The Project brought the island meant the local people became a centre for the betelnut trade, the green gold. The new wealth of the locals attracted people from other islands for trade and business opportunities. Suddenly they had street vendors and the market was full of strangers. The increased wealth brought greater wealth disparity on the island, which brought crime and theft and conflict.

"Even we feel scared walking at night. It didn't used to be like that," Jill said.

If the stand-off at the Manus Island detention centre rests upon an argument over safety, there are clear signs that there are dangers in the community regardless of whether or not you are a refugee.

At the two other supermarkets on the island, many of the shelves are empty. Since the razing of the Chinese-owned supermarket, the demand for food has stripped the cupboards bare. On this island it is easier to get soft drink than bottled water. There has been a delayed shipment to the island which means there is an island-wide fuel shortage. The electricity is being cut off during the day to save energy.

"Life is hard in Manus," Jill says. "But these refugees are given everything. Food, housing, cigarettes, an allowance. What do we get?"

I learn that there are many locals who feel the same way. In their corrugated iron housing, is it any wonder they are resentful of the million-dollar facilities housing the asylum seekers?

From Jill and her friends' perspective, the problems all started when the refugees were forced to live in the community.

"This was not the Manus people's decision. The refugees want to go to Australia. They don't want to stay in Manus. This causes problems for everyone here. We don't want them here if they are unhappy. Those men have been here for four years and they need to be resettled somewhere else."

'It was all lies'

The Australian and Papua New Guinea governments are determined to relocate the refugees and asylum seekers to two new settlement locations on the island. East Lorengau Transit Centre (ELTC) was built three years ago and houses processed refugees. West Haus, or Hillside Haus depending on who you are talking to, accommodates those who have been given negative refugee assessments. There is supposed to be a third site, but no one in the community knows where it is.

Gulam* is a short man from Bangladesh in his 40s with chipmunk cheeks and a comber. He says his hair started to go grey when he arrived in Manus, a stress-related fade. He moved to ELTC from the Manus Island Regional Process Centre (MIRPC) in July 2015.

"They told me I would have more freedom, more opportunity, more money there. But it was all lies."

Gulam sleeps in a cramped room that barely fits two bunk beds with three other men. There is no air conditioning so it is too hot to stay inside the room during the day. Twelve people share one kitchen and one toilet. At the front entrance to the centre there is a boom gate manned by Australian and PNG security guards. An easily scaleable fence surrounds the perimeter. The refugees are not allowed visitors. It's another detention centre, another prison, just with a different face.

Every refugee I meet in the community in Manus has a story of violence at the hands of locals.

"On the road to market, we pass through the jungle and people hide there like tigers and attack us. They threaten us with machetes and demand money, cigarettes and our mobile phones. I have been attacked and robbed four times. They think we are rich," Gulam says.

But most of the refugees appear rich only in comparison to the poverty of the local community. In reality their smart phones are paid off week by week. Those refugees in ELTC receive 100 kina (\$A40) allowance per week and a small amount of food.

"With that money I must buy medication, phone credit and groceries. And cigarettes. Before Manus I didn't smoke. I became addicted to the free cigarettes in the camp," Gulam says.

"When we lived in the detention centre we were given free cigarettes which the locals expected us to share. But they don't realise that the people living in East Lorengau don't get free cigarettes any more," says Nasir*, a young Rohingya man.

Most of the physical dangers for refugees appear to be a product of wealth inequality. Impoverished local young men, drunk or high, picking on refugees as easy targets.

There are only a few refugees who have jobs in the community. Nasir is a truck driver but he can't find any work because there aren't any jobs on the island. Gulam sells packaged lunches at the market in town for income, but he thinks it's too dangerous to leave the centre to continue his work. The men don't feel like they belong in Manus, they feel like unwanted outsiders.

"The local call us illegal immigrants. They tell us to go back to our own countries. We tell them that your government brought us here," Gulam says.

Without work, without purpose, without family, life becomes unbearable and some men resort to alcohol and marijuana to dull the pain. In town I see an intoxicated Iranian man stumbling across the road shouting belligerently at passersby. Behaviour like this makes many locals believe the refugees bring the violence upon themselves.

In the MIRPC, one of security's jobs was to keep people alive, to cut people down when they tried to hang themselves. The danger of East Lorengau is that there isn't enough security to prevent the men from hurting themselves. There have been two suicides in the community in the past three months.

'Life is a struggle'

It is clear the trust between the refugees and the locals has broken down. They are suspicious of each other, they are critical of each other. Despite this tension, there are many friendships and relationships between locals and refugees.

Umsal* is a handsome man with Bollywood actor features. He is from the Sundarbans in Bangladesh, a vast jungle of tigers and snakes and elephants.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/we-dont-want-them-here-if-they-are-unhappy-simmering-tensions-on-manus-island-20171116-gzn6cb.html>

8. Two men trapped in the nightmare on Manus Island share their stories

Mamamia
Lana Hirschowitz
November 11, 2017

Latif* lived on the border of Aghansitan and Pakistan, he writes from Manus Island.

“I am a Shiite Muslim and my native village, Samir is in Kurram Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) of Pakistan. Civil bureaucrats administer the area, but must do so with consultation with the Maliks (Tribal Elders).

Our family was always active in the affairs of the area and were well educated back as far as my great-grandfather who was the first Tribal Graduate who served in the British Army as a Lieutenant. Sectarianism and extremism have been historical realities in the area and as such the Sunni extremists made life difficult for us. The rise of Taliban in Afghanistan further escalated the sectarian strife in FATA and North West Frontier Province as they severely targeted the Shia's minority and supported the majority Sunni Muslims.

After September 11, when the USA and her Allies led the war on terrorism in Afghanistan, many terrorists entered Pakistan via Kurram Agency. In 2001 a group of 156 Al-Qaeda and Taliban men were captured by the local Shias with the help of Kurram Levy Force and the terrorists were handed over to Pakistani government and subsequently to the USA.

On December 19, 2001 when these Al-Qaeda captives were being transported from Kurram to a detention centre in Peshawar, they grabbed guns and fled. Once again the local Turi Shias fully cooperated in apprehending the escaped prisoners and my grandfather, Malik Yousaf Ali, (an influential tribal Malik (elder) and senior member of Tribal Shia Jirga), mobilised tribesmen and played an important part in the arrest of the these terrorists.

Unfortunately, the Sunni extremists of Kurram Agency and Waziristan provided shelter to the terrorists from different countries in FATA and reorganised them in the Sunni majority areas. Since then FATA and North West Frontier Province of Pakistan have become safe havens for the terrorists.

The terrorists started to target my family due to the role my grandfather and father played against the extremists' elements. My father was the vice president of the Turi-Bangash Supreme Council and he also mobilised people against Talibanisation and extremism, as well as promoting enlightened moderation.

The extremists made several attempts on our lives and we lost family members. We regularly received threatening telephone calls and written notes. I had to stop studying and my father had to close down his profitable business. We were always worried about the threats we were getting from radical Sunni Muslims and Talibans.

But life goes on and we had to go outside and carry on living. It was on 24 May 2007, when I came out of my home and was on the way to the market that I was confronted by armed men. After a short altercation about my beliefs, I was fired upon and shot. I became unconscious and luckily a passerby rushed me to the emergency ward of the nearby Hayat Shaheed Teaching Hospital. It was reported to the police but no action was taken against the terrorists.

After that incident, I was confined to the four walls of my home and had no other option but to leave Pakistan and seek asylum somewhere. I came to Australia by boat in August 2013. I had never imagined travelling by boat to Australia, as I knew the perilous journey, but I was becoming extremely frustrated with the unwillingness of the Pakistani government to protect us.

Aside from the physical attack on my life the extremists made several attempts on the lives of my other family members. In 2005 terrorists attacked my uncle who was driving with his daughters, their car was severely damaged and were badly injured and taken to Sadda hospital. In 2008, unknown extremists tried to kidnap my uncles, several attempts were also made on other family members. My uncle who was a lecturer in the Department of History, University of Peshawar had to quit his job.

I have told my story to Australian immigration and they gave me refugee status. On Manus Island I have provided all the evidence but it hasn't helped us yet.

I have prayed every single day for my death as I am too tired to fight this situation. I regret getting on that boat but, I had a little brother and sister, they asked me to get them to a safe country and safe life but I failed them.

My family is very worried about me and even though I am in great pain I tell them that I am alright because my mother loves me so much and she will cry and I cannot see her like that. When I told my mum I learned to cook some Western dishes she was shocked that I am able to cook – to her that's a miracle.

I have two elder sisters they are married then it's me, then the twins. Our mother put everything she had into us but she loves me the most because I was the first boy of my whole family. I was given so much love from everyone and now I am starving without food and water.”

Nabi* has been on Manus Island for four years. He writes "I am Rohingya from Myanmar, we fled from Myanmar because the situation was very bad for the Rohingya people, I fled to Malaysia, then Indonesia, then Australia by boat.

"Boat trips are hard; you can't stand up, you are scared to drown, people get sick in the boats, people are angry in the boats, people cry in the boats but I had to take that boat, I had to flee because I am Rohingya and stateless. I could not get a passport without any documents so I had no choice except to flee by boat.

I am 27 years old, have seven brothers but I haven't seen my family for five years. I love football and am a die-hard fan of Real Madrid. I would really love to go to their stadium and watch a match. That's my biggest wish but right now I'm worried I won't survive.

We've been suffering for more than four years, but now this camp has closed we have nothing. I would love to go outside if I felt safe but I don't, so I choose to stay in even though I'm hungry.

If I stay, I can survive, if I go, I will get food but I won't survive."

These men are depressed and scared, it takes great courage to share their stories and we implore you to open your hearts and imagine, just for a minute, what you would do if you were not born in this lucky country?

*Names have been withheld to protect the individuals. Story compiled by Lana Hirschowitz.

<https://www.mamamia.com.au/manus-island-crisis/>

9. Man on Manus faces deportation order despite 'real risk' of torture or death

PNG acknowledges risk to asylum seeker's life if he returns to Iran but man has not been formally recognised as refugee

The Guardian
Ben Doherty on Manus Island
Tuesday 21 November 2017 14.02 AEDT

An asylum seeker held on Manus Island – who has collapsed three times this year from an acute heart condition – has now fallen into a legal limbo, simultaneously ordered for deportation while the PNG government recognises he faces torture or being killed if he is sent back to Iran.

He faces a potentially indefinite detention.

Dalir (not his real name) has been told by PNG immigration authorities he has not been formally recognised as a refugee and that a deportation order has been issued for his removal.

However, a letter from PNG immigration to Dalir says a "deportation risk assessment" has found there is a "real risk you will be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary deprivation of life ... the imposition of the death penalty".

The majority – more than 70% – of the men on Manus have been recognised as refugees. But Dalir's case is potentially one of dozens where asylum seekers might fall outside the protection of the UN refugee convention but cannot be returned to their home countries because they face persecution or possibly death.

Forcibly moved from Australia to Manus in 2013, Dalir initially refused to engage with PNG's refugee status determination, arguing he never sought asylum in that country.

He has since sought to submit to PNG immigration's assessment process but he has been told he has been formally and finally denied refugee status, and under PNG law his claim for protection cannot be reassessed.

Others from Iran who have claimed similar grounds for protection to Dalir's have been recognised as refugees.

Currently held in Lorengau, where the Guardian met with him, Dalir has been told by PNG's immigration department the minister for foreign affairs and immigration "has ordered that you be detained and removed from Papua New Guinea".

However, the deportation risk assessment has found a "real risk" of torture or arbitrary execution in Iran, "and therefore the government of Papua New Guinea will not remove you".

Dalir finds himself in a legal purgatory. He faces indefinite detention for as long as he remains in PNG.

"As you are not a refugee, you do not have a right to remain in Papua New Guinea and your removal and detention orders remain in effect," he has been told.

His only option out is to elect to voluntarily return to Iran, the country where, by PNG's own assessment, he faces a real risk of being tortured or killed.

PNG immigration has been contacted for comment.

Dalir's health has deteriorated precipitously while on Manus Island. Since February this year, he has collapsed three times, most recently on 5 November, when it took more than four hours for him to be taken from the now-closed Manus Island detention centre to Lorengau for medical treatment.

When he arrived at Lorengau hospital, there was no working ECG machine and no capacity to do a blood test.

"I have never seen nor heard of a hospital without capacity for blood tests nor access to ECG machine," Dr Paddy McLisky from Doctors for Refugees, who has been in regular contact with Dalir, said.

"Several doctors working in the immigration detention system, including a visiting cardiologist, have recommended various tests to elicit the cause of Dalir's recurrent symptoms of varying severity of chest pain, collapse and palpitations or tachycardia," McLisky said.

McLisky said he was worried for Dalir's long-term health after he suffered a heart attack in February, and injured his heart muscle.

"In my opinion the most important test for Dalir is electrophysiological study which will determine if he has a short circuit in his heart, and if it can be fixed by ablation treatment, both of which are not available in PNG."

Simon Bruck, a lawyer from the Refugee Advice and Casework Service, and who represents Dalir, said he was being denied necessary, possibly life-saving, medical care.

"A cardiologist advised more than six months ago that my client needs tests overseas, as the tests he needs are not available in PNG. Because he is not getting medical tests he needs, my client is afraid the next heart attack could kill him.

"Australian Border Force is denying appropriate medical care to a number of our clients. In our legal opinion, denial of medical treatment amounts to negligence."

Dalir's case manager, Natasha Blucher from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, said his mental health had suffered significantly over four years of detention and the ongoing uncertainty over his future.

"A life-threatening illness is terrifying for anyone, even in a position where they receive proper medical care. For Dalir, knowing that he has a heart condition that is not diagnosed, and that he could have a heart attack at any time, is truly terrifying."

Blucher said Dalir's current legal status was an "absurd limbo" that placed his life at risk.

"While legally recognising that Dalir cannot return to his country of origin, authorities have denied him any clear pathway to protection. He has a document stating that he cannot be deported because he faces torture or death in his home country, but which also states that he has a deportation order current.

"In effect, it appears that the only option for him is to remain detained indefinitely in Papua New Guinea."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/21/man-on-manus-faces-deportation-order-despite-real-risk-of-torture-or-death>

10. Manus Island: PNG police move into detention centre and tell refugees to leave

Peter Dutton confirms 'police operation' under way, as refugees report they have been told to hand over phones and go within hours

The Guardian
Helen Davidson and Ben Doherty
Thursday 23 November 2017 10.14 AEDT

A police operation is under way on Manus Island, with Papua New Guinean police and immigration officers entering the former detention centre in an effort to move detainees out, more than three weeks into a deteriorating humanitarian crisis.

A number of refugees inside the centre have reported large numbers of officers, including the paramilitary police mobile squad, have entered and given them an hour to leave. The officers shouted at detainees and demanded that they hand over phones.

Refugees described police as intimidating and aggressive as they dismantled structures and threw away refugees' belongings. One officer was seen carrying a large bush knife, which are common on Manus.

A video livestreamed from inside the facility showed men chanting "human rights help us, they want to kill us", and two men apparently unconscious. Walid Zazai, filming the scene, said it was a medical emergency but they had no assistance.

"We don't know if he had a heart attack because he had previously problems," Zazai said of one.

The second unconscious man had a history of epileptic attacks, he said.

On Thursday morning Australia's immigration minister, Peter Dutton, confirmed a "police operation" was underway at the centre, and accused the detainees of trashing it.

"I think it's outrageous that people are still there," he told 2GB radio. "They've trashed the facility, they're living in squalor."

"The Australian taxpayers have paid about \$10m for a new facility and we want people to move."

He likened the situation to building a new house for tenants but they refuse to move in.

Dutton's repeated claims that the alternative accommodation units are ready and suitable for detainees has been repeatedly debunked by observers and published videos and photos of blocked toilets, bathrooms without water, and buildings still under construction. Detainees have repeatedly claimed they are not safe in Lorengau, citing frequent violent attacks and the lack of security at the new facilities.

Some refugees have taken shelter on the roof of buildings inside the decommissioned detention centre. Some had been sleeping on top of shipping containers, in expectation the police would move in.

Behrouz Boochani, a journalist and refugee inside the centre, said immigration and police had started searching rooms and telling refugees and asylum seekers: "Move, move," and, "You only have an hour to move."

Boochani said some refugees were building barriers to halt police progress, others were hiding in the centre. "We are blockading right now," he said.

He added: "They are destroying everything. Shelters, tanks, beds and all of our belongings. They are very aggressive and put our belongings in the rubbish bins. The refugees still are silent are watching them so scared.

"The refugees are sitting peacefully and immigration and police are asking them to leave the prison camp. The refugees are only listening and completely silent. They are talking on the microphone and shouting 'move, move'."

Video from the Sudanese refugee Abdul Aziz Adam shows immigration officials in yellow shirts surrounded by uniformed police officers. One uniformed PNG police officer is issuing instructions over a megaphone to the 380 men barricaded inside.

"This place where you are living right now is no longer legal centre for the refugees and non-refugees reside," the officer says. "This place will be handed back to the PNG defence force.

"It is their military base, and your staying here ... would be seen as illegal and unlawful.

"All the services have been cut off, and I sympathise for that, and there is no power, there is no water."

PNG police had originally planned to launch its "Operation Helpim Friends" on Wednesday, but it was cancelled pending the outcome of a legal appeal, now adjourned to 15 December. The police commissioner, Gari Baki, described the operation as "politely" asking the detainees to leave voluntarily, and said no force would be used.

There had been earlier reports the Australian federal police were involved, but a spokesman for the AFP said their one liaison officer on the island was not involved in Thursday's action.

On Thursday morning a letter, signed by Australians of the Year between 1983 and 2015, pleaded with the Australian government to restore essential services and allow doctors to treat the men who remain inside the centre.

The situation inside the centre is deteriorating, and the letter warned it was "inevitable" that people would become sick and even die because of the lack of food and water, medical care and sanitation.

Last week members of the Australian Medical Association voted unanimously to call on the government to allow doctors access to the centre, to assess the men's health and living conditions.

On Wednesday the UNHCR said the humanitarian crisis was human-made and entirely preventable. It was a "damning indictment of a policy meant to avoid Australia's international obligations", said Nai Jit Lam, the UNHCR's deputy regional representative in Canberra.

The Australian government has remained resolute in its policy, dismissing criticism and rejecting offers of help, including from New Zealand to take 150 refugees and to separately provide \$2.7m to PNG to provide essential services.

It has also warned New Zealand against making any deals with PNG without Australia, suggesting that would affect diplomatic relations.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/23/manus-island-png-police-move-into-detention-centre-and-tell-refugees-to-leave>

11. 'The situation is critical': cholera fears on Manus as water and medicine run out

Special report: After the wells were poisoned, many of the 400 refugees living in Australia's former detention centre face life-threatening illnesses

The Guardian
Ben Doherty on Manus Island
Monday 20 November 2017 15.25 AEDT

The piercing pain in Joinul Islam's right arm keeps him from sleeping. He can't bend it to eat properly (to eat with one's left is considered unclean), and there are precious few painkillers to allow him to rest.

Four months ago, he was attacked by a gang in Lorengau, his elbow was sliced open with a machete and the surgery to repair it did not work. He was promised follow-up surgery, but it never happened. Now, he waits for more medical treatment that might never come.

In the meantime, he bears the pain – his right arm fused at an awkward angle – without assistance. He has been told by Papua New Guinea authorities he can get more painkillers, but only in Lorengau, the place where he was attacked.

"I cannot go back there, I cannot go back. How can I go to Lorengau? I need a safe place," he says.

Seated in a quiet corner of the darkened Manus Island detention centre, he speaks barely above a whisper. The pain, at one point, kept him awake for two weeks, he says. "I am so tired," he tells the Guardian, as tears well in his eyes.

Islam has been formally recognised as a refugee, having fled persecution in his homeland Bangladesh. "My country, political is problem, is not safe. For safe place, I come to Australia."

Islam says he feels under intense pressure to quit the Manus Island detention centre, even to abandon his claim for protection altogether, and risk returning to Bangladesh. "All the time is pressure. My life is very difficult. I have been running five years. Too long," he says.

Islam's case is barely remarkable inside the condemned the Manus Island detention centre – officially shuttered on 31 October, with all essential services withdrawn.

There are few uninjured or healthy people among the 400 who remain in the camp, surviving on rainwater and makeshift wells, smuggled food, and solar panels powering phones that give them a link to the outside world.

Inside the camp, the Guardian saw men who, while walking through the wreckage of the site, had stepped on nails that had pierced their feet. Their infected wounds wept pus as they walked. Others revealed open and infected sores on their legs – cognisant that Iranian asylum seeker Hamid Kehazaei died after a small infection that, even with medical intervention, spiralled rapidly out of control in the detention centre and ultimately killed him.

Nearly three weeks after the camp was formally closed, the medical situation in the condemned Manus Island detention centre has reached a new, even more dangerous stage. Even men who appear healthy are battling diarrhoea and vomiting brought on by drinking salty, contaminated water pulled from makeshift wells.

On Saturday Australian Medical Association members voted unanimously to call on the Australian government to grant access for doctors to be allowed into the detention centre to intervene in what the association describes as "a worsening and dangerous situation emerging on Manus".

"It is our responsibility as a nation with a strong human rights record to ensure that we look after the health and wellbeing of these men, and provide them with safe and hygienic living conditions," the AMA president, Michael Gannon, said.

Periodically, Papua New Guinean police and immigration officials – on Australian orders, the Guardian was told – enter and poison the wells, befouling them with dirt and rubbish and making the water undrinkable.

The men have some purification tablets and boil what they can, but their situation is unsustainable. “We have a new hard problem these days,” Iranian refugee Behrouz Boochani says. “The toilets are full and there’s a bad smell spreading in the prison camp. Hygiene conditions are worsening day by day. Hope we have some rain today to wash away the bad smell.

“The situation in Manus is critical. We are thirsty and have been waiting for rain in the past few days. We have some water we’re rationing but it’s not enough in tropical heat. Immigration destroyed the water we’d collected from tropical rain.”

David Yapu, the police commander on Manus, has said fear of a widespread outbreak of potentially fatal illness was very real. “The centre is unhygienic, it is subject to illness such as typhoid, cholera and dysentery,” he says.

Cholera, most often spread by unsafe water, is easily treatable with the correct medication, but without it, the infection can kill in hours.

There is a meagre and dwindling cache of medical supplies inside the camp – and a fraught supply chain bringing more in – but refugees fear what will happen when these run out. Several refugees have become the unofficial medical officers of the camp, dispensing what medications they have.

“Even when IHMS [International Health and Medical Services] were here,” one refugee says, “this all we got. Panadol and water. Whatever was wrong with you: panadol and water.”

Many of the men, after four years in indefinite detention, have been on antidepressant medication or reliant on an ever-increasing regimen of sleeping pills. These are almost extinguished now.

The Australian immigration minister, Peter Dutton, said in a television interview last week the refugees still inside the Manus Island detention centre should leave it immediately, spruiking the alternative healthcare available.

“People are squatting illegally on this maritime base and we want them to move peacefully. There are buses available; people can move to a new \$10m facility where they have accommodation, they’ve got kitchens, they have running water, all of the services that you could imagine, including health services, security, etc; but people are trying to make a political statement by staying at the regional processing centre.”

While there is greater access to healthcare for the refugees and asylum seekers who have moved to the alternative accommodation elsewhere in Lorengau province, this remains limited. The proposed accommodation centres are still being built, with limited running water and unreliable electricity. Refugees confirmed on Monday there is still no running water in the new West Lorengau centre. Seriously ill refugees are moved to Lorengau hospital, but that is in a state of disrepair and decay. The hospital is already far beyond its capacity, it has few working diagnostic machines, and regularly runs out of medicine itself.

When a refugee was transported to Lorengau hospital from the detention centre two weeks ago suffering from what was believed to be a heart attack, the hospital’s only ECG machine was broken.

Nurses were able only to take the man’s blood pressure before discharging him and sending him to alternative accommodation in Lorengau. The Guardian met the man in Lorengau; he has not had any follow-up treatment.

Those refugees and asylum seekers who are sicker still are sent to Pacific International hospital in Port Moresby for treatment, but even here, there is often little treatment offered.

There are more than 120 refugees and asylum seekers housed – at Australian expense – in hotels around Port Moresby. One hotel has been booked in its entirety for several months with refugees and asylum seekers from Manus. Australian Border Force officials are housed nearby.

In the capital, the Guardian met more than a dozen refugees and asylum seekers awaiting treatment.

Some have been in Moresby two months and have had a single appointment, with no follow-up scheduled. There are also several women who have been sent from Nauru with serious illnesses and injuries, but they have not yet been treated.

“Everybody here is sick, they say we are sent here for treatment but nothing happens, we just get worse,” one refugee from Myanmar tells the Guardian. “We just wait, for what, we don’t know. Who knows what our future will be.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/20/the-situation-is-critical-cholera-fears-on-manus-as-water-and-medicine-run-out>

12. Australia accused of medical negligence on Manus Island

Radio New Zealand

4:46 pm on 17 November 2017

Benjamin Robinson-Drawbridge, Reporter

A doctor and a lawyer advocating for a Manus Island refugee with a heart condition say Australia is neglecting its responsibility to provide him with adequate healthcare.

The 38-year-old known as Samuel, who had a heart attack in February, said cardiologists told him the treatment he needed was not available in Papua New Guinea.

He collapsed this month during the refugees' occupation of the former detention centre after food, water and power were cut from the facility.

The Manus Island hospital did not have equipment to test his blood or heart rhythm, and now in detention in the island's Hillside Haus, Samuel is still having chest pain.

The refugee said after four years of Australian detention, he was due an Australian standard of care.

"A visiting doctor who came from Australia and another cardiologist in Port Moresby both recommended that I need to do some tests which aren't available in PNG. Australia owe me treatment. I don't care where."

Brisbane based GP Paddy McLisky from the advocacy group Doctors for Refugees said healthcare services for refugees on Manus Island were inadequate and the Australian government was guilty of medical negligence.

"Honestly, I don't say that lightly but we know this man has a documented history of a heart attack, we know he had symptoms consistent with chest pain," he said.

"Papua New Guinea, being a developing nation, we don't expect them to have all the bells and whistles everywhere that we have in Australia.

"But bearing in mind the department of immigration, the Australian government has designated Lorengau hospital as the after hours care provider for these men, we find this highly inappropriate and inadequate."

Lawyer Simon Bruck from Sydney's Refugee Advice and Casework Service said the Australian government was neglecting its duty of care.

"Australia has a responsibility to provide protection to someone that's lawfully claimed asylum, as has the man known as Samuel," said Mr Bruck.

"So Australia needs to uphold its duty of care to these people by providing adequate health services."

Australia has contracted International Health and Medical Services, or IHMS, to provide healthcare for Manus Island refugees at the East Lorengau Transit centre.

IHMS said it held general practitioner and mental health clinics between 9am and 5pm during the week and from 9am to 1pm on Saturdays.

Mr Bruck said Samuel was told by a doctor at the transit centre that further testing of his heart in Australia would be a waste of money.

"When he saw a doctor yesterday, their response was that it would be a waste of money for further tests and treatment to be done for him in Australia," said Mr Bruck.

"And that the standard of care that he should expect should be the standard of Papua New Guinea and any higher standard would be a waste of money.

"So, I find that very concerning."

Dr McLisky said Samuel was due for further testing as recommended by cardiologists, but he said this treatment, like many medical procedures in Australian offshore detention, had been delayed.

"I think what we are seeing here is this typical kind of delay of medical services, which so many of these men, and indeed refugee families on Nauru, so many of this cohort are experiencing," said Dr McLisky.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/344084/australia-accused-of-medical-negligence-on-manus-island>

13. Manus Island: AMA calls on Australia to let doctors help refugees

Australian Medical Association votes unanimously to lobby for access to hundreds in detention centre standoff

The Guardian

Reuters

Saturday 18 November 2017 17.08 AEDT

The Australian Medical Association called on Saturday for the government to allow independent doctors and other health experts to help more than 400 asylum seekers and refugees languishing inside a recently closed detention centre in Papua New Guinea.

The asylum seekers have shut themselves inside the Australian-run Manus Island centre for the past 18 days, defying attempts by Australia and Papua New Guinea to close it in a standoff the United Nations describes as a "looming humanitarian crisis".

Australia has shut access to the centre, and staff, including doctors, have left, leaving the men without sufficient food, clean water, power or medical care.

Members of the AMA voted unanimously to call on the government to grant access to the centre so doctors could assess the men's health, wellbeing and living conditions.

"The AMA has made many representations on this matter, both publicly and in private but, with a worsening and more dangerous situation emerging on Manus, the federal council strongly believes that urgent action and answers are needed," AMA president Michael Gannon said.

"It is our responsibility as a nation with a strong human rights record to ensure that we look after the health and wellbeing of these men, and provide them with safe and hygienic living conditions."

Government spokespeople were not immediately available for comment.

Australia's "sovereign borders" immigration policy, which refuses to allow asylum seekers arriving by boat to reach its shores, has been heavily criticised by the United Nations and human rights groups but has bipartisan political support in Australia.

The 421 asylum seekers on Manus island say they fear violent reprisals from the community if they move to transit centres, pending possible resettlement to the US.

Sudanese refugee Abdul Aziz said via text message on Saturday that PNG officials had started to dismantle the centre's perimeter fences and food was running low.

"We are waiting, drinking from the rainwater ... it's tense feeling, we don't have any idea what PNG will do to us. Their attitude toward us they are really aggressive," Aziz said.

PNG's supreme court ruled last year that the centre breached its laws and fundamental human rights, leading to the decision to close it.

New Zealand has offered to accept 150 of the men, but Australia has declined the offer saying the priority was an existing refugee swap deal negotiated with former US President Barack Obama last year.

Under that deal, up to 1,250 asylum seekers could be sent to the US and Australia will in turn accept refugees from Central America.

Hundreds of people rallied in support of the Manus Island refugees in Sydney on Saturday.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/18/manus-island-ama-calls-on-australia-to-let-doctors-help-refugees>

14. New Zealand urged to bypass Australia to resolve refugee crisis

Pressure grows on NZ prime minister Jacinda Ardern to make unilateral decision to take hundreds of men from closed detention centre

The Guardian

Eleanor Ainge Roy in Dunedin

Tuesday 14 November 2017 13.52 AEDT

Refugee advocates in New Zealand and beyond are urging the new Labour government to bypass talks with Australia to resolve the escalating humanitarian crisis on Manus Island.

Prime minister Jacinda Ardern has offered to take 150 of the 400 refugees and asylum seekers who have barricaded themselves in an abandoned detention centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. The men are living in squalor without power, sanitation facilities or medical treatment, but say they fear for their safety in PNG if they were to leave.

One week ago Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull refused New Zealand's offer, and the situation continues to deteriorate, with Amnesty International reporting 90 men are now sick.

Ardern said she intended to press Turnbull to accept New Zealand's offer this week at their meeting in Manila, as direct talks with Australia were the "fastest route" to resolve the crisis.

"We made the offer because we saw a great need. No matter what label you put on it there is absolute need and there is harm being done," Ardern said at the weekend at the Apec summit in Vietnam.

"I see the human face of this and I see the need and the role New Zealand needs to play. I think it's clear that we don't see what's happening there as acceptable, that's why the offer's there."

By Tuesday, the two leaders had not held formal talks on the issue.

Papua New Guinea MP Charlie Benjamin told Radio New Zealand that the New Zealand government should bypass Australia and discuss its offer directly with the PNG government and the UN, a suggestion refugee advocates in New Zealand are also pushing for.

Arif Saeid from the Refugee Council for New Zealand said Ardern had the "freedom" to bypass the Australian government and a humanitarian obligation to do so.

"New Zealand is one of the signatories for the UN refugee convention and if Australia does not accept New Zealand's offer, then New Zealand can and should go straight to PNG," said Saeid.

"The situation is getting worse day by day on Manus Island. Before anything horrible happens, New Zealand has to intervene."

Saeid said New Zealand should also seriously consider offering asylum to all 600 men from Manus Island, as the men's welfare was in immediate jeopardy.

Michele Cox, the CEO of Asylum Seekers Support Trust in Auckland, said if Australia did not accept New Zealand's offer within the next few days, it was time for the government to press ahead regardless.

"We are a wealthy country, we can find that support if we really need to and this is a crisis, so it would be good to see New Zealand step in and show its humanitarian colours.

"I think the NZ government has made all the right noises. It is a very quick test of whether they are prepared to put their money where their mouth is. I have hope that they will do more."

Greens MP Golriz Ghahraman, herself a former refugee and human rights lawyer for the UN, said Australia appeared to be "stalling" over making a decision regarding the Manus refugees and was using "delay tactics" to wait for media attention to subside so the men could be forcibly removed from the facility. She joined calls for New Zealand to take the men.

"The indication from the Mangere Refugee Centre [in Auckland] is that they can take 150 to 194 in an ordinary intake, and they can take 250 with bunking. So they can take 250, we have the resources for that."

Australian NGOs had offered to fly to New Zealand and provide "wraparound" services for Manus Island refugees, said Ghahraman, if New Zealand took the full 600.

Ghahraman said to the best of her knowledge the government was currently negotiating only with Australia, although the NZ Herald reported seeing foreign affairs minister Winston Peters holding private talks with the Papua New Guinea prime minister, Peter O'Neill, at the Apec summit.

"The best option obviously would be if Australia stops selling off its human rights obligations in the Pacific, closed the camps and just processed these people as refugees, as it has an obligation to do," said Ghahraman.

The United Nations refugee agency on Tuesday urged Australia to accept New Zealand's offer to resettle 150 refugees. "We urge Australia to reconsider this and take up the offer," Nai Jit Lam, deputy regional representative at the UNHCR said.

New Zealand currently accepts 750 refugees every year, with the new Labour government pledging to double that number in the next three years.

The New Zealand Red Cross, which helps process and integrate asylum seekers, said it was ready and prepared to accept the Manus Island refugees.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/14/manus-island-refugee-new-zealand-australia-crisis>

15. Manus Island activists locked to gates of Australian high commission in Wellington

Stuff.co.nz

Last updated 19:49

November 13 2017

Activists have chained themselves to the gates of the Australian high commission in Wellington to highlight the plight of refugees and asylum-seekers on Manus Island.

The purpose of the protest was to prevent anyone inside from leaving, Peace Action Wellington spokeswoman Emma Cullen said.

There were about 20 protesters outside the high commission on Monday afternoon, of whom three or four were chained to the gates.

The protesters hope to stop high commission staff leaving on Monday evening, to highlight the plight of Manus detainees.

"We're shutting them down for as long as we can ... at least until the evening, to affect these people, and for these people to acknowledge and question what their Government is doing," Cullen said.

Police said they were called at 3.28pm on Monday, and said they were "liaising with the protesters and the high commission".

Shortly after 6pm, the protesters unchained themselves, and left – though vowing that they would be back.

Detainees in Manus Island detention centre in February. They have since been ordered to leave the centre for alternative accommodation, but are refusing.

Cullen said earlier: "Australia has illegally detained these asylum-seekers for years now, and now they've essentially abandoned them and they've got no food, no water, no medicine, and no power.

"This is the 13th day they've been in a detention centre without any basic needs.

"What Australia is doing is inhumane, and that is why we are here locking down the Australian high commission."

Helen Lyttelton, who was chained to a gate by a lock around her neck, said she was protesting for the people without food and medication, and said they were an incredible vulnerable population.

We're here to show them we don't need Australia's permission to take on refugees. All they're seeking is safety ... and they've been unable to leave."

She hoped high commission staff, when they tried to leave, would have some empathy for what the Manus Island detainees had experienced.

"For years, they've been unable to move. They've not had freedom of movement for up to four years."

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has made an offer to Australian counterpart Malcolm Turnbull to accept some of the Manus detainees, but no agreement has yet been reached.

At a media standup in The Philippines on Monday, Ardern said she had a chance to talk to Turnbull about the Manus situation only "in passing".

"When I have information to update you on with regards to Manus, I will do that," she said.

"But it is a complex issue, we are working through it, and we're working through it closely."

New Zealand had a "strong relationship" with Australia, and an important one, she said.

"It's important to continue to highlight that New Zealand is here to play a role, both to assist Australia with the situation that they have, but also ultimately to find a solution for those that are refugees," she said.

"Ultimately, there are a group of people that do need to be resettled."

America had a "significant deal" on the table, she said. "But that won't be a complete solution."

Acting Australian high commissioner Andrew Cumpston did not want to comment on the protest.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/98839140/manus-island-activists-locked-to-gates-of-australian-high-commission-in-wellington>

16. Jacinda Ardern: New Zealand will give \$2.7m to Manus and Nauru refugees

Canberra Times
November 15 2017 - 9:42AM
Karen Sweeney

New Zealand will spend \$2.7million on essential services for refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru, while maintaining pressure on Australia to accept an offer to resettle 150 people.

NZ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern revealed the spending commitment after her second conversation in two days with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull over Canberra's handling of the issue.

Meetings have also been held by officials from both sides and the Kiwis will begin work to expedite processing refugees if and when the offer is accepted.

But it's still expected to take about five months to process and resettle any refugees sent to New Zealand and there remains a need to care for those on the islands in the interim, she said.

"We intend to work with Papua New Guinea and other agencies like the International Red Cross to financially support them with any additional needs that they may need to be met while those refugees remain on the island," Ms Ardern said in Manila late on Tuesday night, local time.

Australia is aware of that offer and Ms Ardern said she imagined it would be pleased, rather than embarrassed, to see New Zealand stepping in to assist with a resolution.

Meanwhile New Zealand's offer has strong support from within the Parliament.

The Senate passed a motion on Tuesday afternoon calling on Mr Turnbull to accept New Zealand's offer.

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has also urged Mr Turnbull to reconsider his opposition to New Zealand taking 150 refugees.

Ms Ardern has spoken to Mr Shorten about the offer, most recently in passing several weeks ago.

"I've seen public statements from him so I've seen his position on it but obviously we're working with the Australian government on the issue," she said.

The offer was first made to Labor prime minister Julia Gillard, who rejected it.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/jacinda-ardern-new-zealand-will-give-27m-to-manus-and-nauru-refugees-20171114-gzlj5m.html>

17. Turnbull avoids sit-down meeting with Jacinda Ardern on refugee offer

New Zealand media says prime minister was 'snubbed' after her Australian counterpart appeared to ignore a public request to discuss her proposal

The Guardian
Oliver Holmes in Manila
Wednesday 15 November 2017 07.57 AEDT

Malcolm Turnbull appears to have ignored a public request by New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Ardern to have a "substantive" discussion on her offer to resettle 150 refugees from Manus Island.

Ardern had said she planned to sit down with her Australian counterpart during the east Asia summit in the Philippines.

But it appeared that no such meeting had been held in Manila, leading to New Zealand media reporting that she had been snubbed.

Asked by reporters on Tuesday night if she had met Turnbull she said: "Not since I saw him in passing but our officials have been talking together."

Pressed if that was the more substantive discussion she had called for two days before, she replied, “no, not necessarily”.

“Both of us are busy, involved in the summit and other bilaterals,” she said. “I think we’re splitting hairs a little bit of whether it needs to be formally sitting down or over a cup of tea in a waiting room ... You’d be surprised what I can do over a cup of tea.”

Ardern’s press secretary Mike Jaspers said she had not been ignored and that the two leaders had “a series of discussions which together have been substantive”.

Turnbull’s office was contacted for comment.

Turnbull was asked in Manila on Tuesday about the refugee resettlement and said “as you know, the prime minister of New Zealand and I have had discussions about that”.

New Zealand has a long-standing offer to take 150 refugees a year from Australian-run offshore detention centres, a deal Canberra has repeatedly rejected.

Australia claims agreeing would provide a “back door” route via New Zealand for people to get to Australia and Turnbull has said it would be “a marketing opportunity” for people smugglers.

Ardern also played down suggestions that her offer had restarted “chatter” among people smugglers about targeting New Zealand as a “soft touch” for their operations.

“I’ve been given no indication that that chatter ever stopped. We know it has been an ongoing issue,” she said.

Ardern, 37, who became prime minister less than a month ago, pushed the issue during a visit to Sydney but Turnbull again rebuffed the offer.

He said the government would consider the deal once it had completed a transfer of refugees to the US, which has agreed to take up to 1,250 refugees from Manus, Papua New Guinea, and Nauru.

However, only 52 refugees to be accepted for resettlement have left the Pacific island camps. The US president, Donald Trump, has lashed the deal made by Barack Obama as “dumb” and complained in a phone call to Turnbull that it would “make me look terrible”.

More than 400 refugees and asylum seekers have locked themselves in an abandoned detention centre on Manus after the Papua New Guinea government closed the facility last month. They are living without power or medical aid but say they fear for their safety if they were to leave.

Amnesty International reports 90 men are now sick and the UN’s refugee agency says the situation inside the centre is a “humanitarian emergency”. The agency has urged both PNG and Australia to end the “unconscionable human suffering”.

Ardern said her offer was made “because we saw a great need. No matter what label you put on it there is absolute need and there is harm being done.

“I see the human face of this and I see the need and the role New Zealand needs to play. I think it’s clear that we don’t see what’s happening there as acceptable, that’s why the offer’s there.”

The United Nations refugee agency on Tuesday urged Australia to accept New Zealand’s offer. “We urge Australia to reconsider this and take up the offer,” Nai Jit Lam, deputy regional representative at the UNHCR said.

New Zealand currently accepts 750 refugees every year. The new Labour government pledged to double that number in the next three years.

Refugee advocates in New Zealand have urged her new Labour government to bypass talks with Australia. They say she could make an offer directly with PNG authorities.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/15/malcolm-turnbull-jacinda-ardern-talks-refugee-offer>

18. New Zealand seeks deal with Australia to resettle Manus and Nauru refugees

Jacinda Ardern seeks cooperation with Australian government after Peter Dutton warns of diplomatic consequences of striking unilateral deal with PNG

The Guardian
Paul Karp in Canberra and Eleanor Ainge Roy in Dunedin
Friday 17 November 2017 13.48 AEDT

New Zealand says it will only take refugees from the offshore detention centre on Manus Island with the cooperation of the Australian government.

A statement from the office of the prime minister Jacinda Ardern, indicating a shift in her position, was issued on Friday after the Australian immigration minister, Peter Dutton, said a move to resettle the refugees could hurt the countries' diplomatic relations.

"New Zealand's relationship with Australia is strong. The offer to take 150 refugees from Manus Island and Nauru remains on the table, but clearly it's up to Australia to take up that offer," Ardern's spokesperson said.

"As the prime minister has said, Australia holds all the critical information on the refugees in Manus Island so any take-up of refugees has to be organised with Australia's assistance. The Papua New Guinea government also said this week that it was focused on working with Australia and that it would not be dealing directly with New Zealand."

The comments – a fresh blow to the refugees – come after Dutton, accepted that New Zealand and Papua New Guinea could do a bilateral deal to resettle people from the regional processing centre but warned that any such deal would have consequences for the countries' diplomatic relationship with Australia.

New Zealand has reiterated its offer to take 150 refugees from Australia's offshore detention centres during a two week-long standoff as people refuse to leave the now-closed Manus Island centre.

Labor urged the Coalition government to consider the offer but Malcolm Turnbull has said it would not do so until the US resettlement deal is complete. On Friday, he told Melbourne radio 3AW "it's a possibility that could happen in the future but it is not ... a near-term prospect at all".

Asked at a press conference in Adelaide about the possibility the refugees could settle in New Zealand, the Labor leader Bill Shorten said: "If New Zealand wants to take the people from Manus Island, Australia shouldn't get in the way.

"They should be allowed to go. It's a solution. I don't know why Australia wants to get in the way."

On Thursday Dutton was asked about a possible bilateral deal between New Zealand and Papua New Guinea and told Sky News: "That's an issue between those two countries. Any sovereign state can enter into bilateral arrangements.

"They would have to think about other equities within the respective relationships," he said. "They would have to think about their relationship with Australia, or what impact that would have."

Shorten said he did not think such a deal would strain relations between the countries.

Despite conceding Australia could not stop such a bilateral deal, Dutton argued it would be counter-productive because "people smugglers are watching eagerly at the moment" and any pathway to come to Australia via Papua New Guinea and New Zealand may "reopen" the movement of people seeking asylum in Australia.

"I'm not going to allow that to happen," he said.

"If any boats arrive tomorrow, those people aren't going to Auckland, they're going to the processing centre on Nauru."

Dutton labelled the New Zealand government's offer of \$3m for services for refugees on Manus Island and Nauru a "waste of money" that could be spent elsewhere, such as on displaced people in Indonesia.

Ardern's spokesperson said in Friday's statement: "If the offer is accepted, all refugees will undergo comprehensive screening and assessment processes that includes credibility and risk assessments and security checks.

"Refugees who do not meet New Zealand's relevant immigration policies, security and biometric checks and risk and health assessment are declined."

The UN human rights committee has urged Australia to immediately close its offshore detention centres and bring the refugees and asylum seekers to Australia or another safe country.

Hundreds of detainees on Manus Island have remained in the now closed facility without food, water or medical supplies for almost a fortnight.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/17/new-zealand-and-png-could-do-deal-on-refugees-peter-dutton-says>

19. Manus Island: Peter Dutton takes swipe at NZ's offer of funding for services

ABC News Online

By Stephen Dziedzic

Thursday November 16 2017, 4:42pm

The split between Australia and New Zealand over refugee policy has deepened, with Immigration Minister Peter Dutton rubbishing the neighbouring country's plan to spend nearly \$3 million improving essential services on Manus Island.

More than 300 men on Manus are still refusing to leave the now-closed detention centre and move to alternative accommodation in the island's main town, Lorengau.

New Zealand has been pressing Australia to accept its offer to resettle 150 refugees from Manus and Nauru.

Earlier this week, it said it would give Papua New Guinea \$2.7 million to provide essential services on Manus Island, but Mr Dutton has dismissed the offer, saying the money would be better spent elsewhere.

"Well, it's a waste of money in my judgement, I mean give that money to another environment somewhere, to Indonesia for example," he told Sky News.

"It's an issue for New Zealand where they spend their money, but from my perspective we want to get people off Manus and have the processing centre closed.

"I don't want false hope being offered to people, I don't want them rejecting the US position on the promise one day they'll go to New Zealand or somewhere else."

New Zealand's new Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern used her first meeting with Malcolm Turnbull earlier this month to make it clear that her country's offer to resettle refugees was still on the table.

Mr Turnbull again rejected it, but left the door ajar to Australia saying yes in the future.

Since then, Ms Ardern has been ratcheting up the pressure on Australia to accept, calling the humanitarian situation on Manus Island unacceptable.

But Mr Dutton argued people smugglers would seize on any deal that saw refugees resettled across the Tasman.

"They market New Zealand the same way they market Australia ... why wouldn't people want to make that trek?" he said.

"At this point in time it's the wrong decision to send people to New Zealand because you will start the boats."

Human rights advocates have been pressing New Zealand and Papua New Guinea to bypass Australia and strike an agreement for New Zealand to take the refugees immediately.

But Mr Dutton warned that would have consequences for Australia's relationship with both countries.

"They would have to think about their relationship with Australia and what impact it would have," he said.

"They'd have to think that through, and we'd have to think that through."

No 'financial assistance from NZ': Dutton

He also took a thinly veiled swipe at New Zealand by arguing it benefited from Australia's tough border protection policies without paying for them.

"We have stopped vessels on their way across the Torres Strait planning to track their way down the east coast of Australia to New Zealand," Mr Dutton said.

"We have put many hundreds of millions of dollars into a defence effort to stop those vessels.

"We do that frankly without any financial assistance from New Zealand.

"If new boats arrive tomorrow those people aren't going to Auckland, they're going to Nauru."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-16/manus-island:-peter-dutton-takes-a-swipe-at-nz/9159288>

20. Peter Dutton opens door to New Zealand refugee deal with Papua New Guinea, but warns of risks

Canberra Times

November 16 2017 - 6:16PM

Michael Koziol

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has opened the door to a potential refugee resettlement deal between Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, acknowledging it is a decision for the two sovereign states that Australia could not block.

But he warned any arrangement would be against Australia's wishes and would run the risk of souring both countries' diplomatic relationships with Australia – making it unlikely without Canberra's blessing.

"That's an issue between those two countries. Any sovereign state can enter into bilateral arrangements," Mr Dutton said in a Sky News interview on Thursday.

"They would have to think about other equities within the respective relationships – they would have to think about their relationship with Australia."

New Zealand has offered to resettle 150 refugees from Manus Island, where about 370 men are still refusing to leave Australia's decommissioned regional processing centre.

The men have remained on the site without food, water or power supplies since October 31, instead collecting rainwater in buckets and bins.

They say they will not move "from one prison to another" and fear for their safety at alternative accommodation in the Manusian town of Lorengau.

The unfolding humanitarian crisis has attracted widespread condemnation from the United Nations, major international charities and human rights observers.

Newly elected NZ leader Jacinda Ardern repeatedly reiterated her country's resettlement offer to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, including at a recent summit of Asia-Pacific nations, but it has been politely declined.

To date, neither PNG nor New Zealand have been willing to circumvent Canberra, despite mounting concern in both countries about the refugees on Manus Island.

But Ms Ardern has been urged by her Greens coalition partners and the New Zealand Refugee Council to start talking directly with Port Moresby.

Australian Labor has urged the Turnbull government to accept the Kiwi offer, with immigration spokesman Shayne Neumann citing the one-off resettlement deal with the US as a precedent.

Mr Dutton's remarks on Thursday indicate Australia has no lawful way of stopping PNG and New Zealand striking a bilateral deal. But he would frown on such an arrangement because it could lead boats to restart.

"The people smugglers are watching eagerly at the moment," he said. If there was a pathway to go from PNG to NZ to Australia, "the train reopens, and I'm not going to allow that to happen".

Mr Dutton said he was not threatening the Kiwis or PNG, but "any sovereign nation, in any arrangement, would have to think about other equities in the relationship".

He pointed out Operation Sovereign Borders, paid for and executed by Australia, also benefits New Zealand by intercepting and turning around boats bound for that country.

It is understood four boats marketed to asylum seekers as being bound for New Zealand - carrying 164 people - have been picked up and turned around under Operation Sovereign Borders.

"If any boats arrive tomorrow, those people aren't going to Auckland, they're going to the processing centre on Nauru," Mr Dutton said on Sky News.

He also dismissed Ms Ardern's undertaking to give \$3 million for services for refugees on Manus Island and Nauru as "a waste of money".

Mr Dutton again called on the 370 remaining men to end the stand-off and move into the alternative accommodation on offer.

"This is like the tenants who refuse to leave the house," he said. "They need to move out of the regional processing centre because it's not safe. They have trashed the place."

PNG police again declined to use force to remove the men as the stand-off entered its 17th day, despite earlier threats they would be forcibly moved to Lorengau.

One of the leaders of the resisting refugees, Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani, said conditions at the site were deteriorating, including dirty toilets, polluted water and untreated infections.

"The bodies [are] getting weak and it's a real danger," he said. "We are living in a condition that is threatening our health."

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/peter-dutton-opens-door-to-new-zealand-refugee-deal-with-papua-new-guinea-but-warns-of-risks-20171116-gzmu3p.html>

21. Church leaders camp out in Christian Porter's office in Manus Island refugee protest

AAP, PerthNow
November 13, 2017 4:24PM

CHURCH leaders who refused to leave the Perth office of Social Services Minister Christian Porter while protesting Australia's handling of Manus Island, have been removed by police and will face trespass charges.

Seven people, who are part of the Love Makes A Way movement, entered Mr Porter's Ellenbrook office just before 2pm on Monday with flowers and muffins.

They began to pray in a circle and insisted they were not interrupting the work of staff, but police arrived soon after to issue move-on notices.

Three men and two women were eventually arrested, and a police spokesman told AAP they would face trespass charges.

The group said their action was taken in solidarity with the more than 400 men on Manus Island, and they urged the Commonwealth to accept New Zealand's offer to resettle 150 people and bring the others to Australia.

Father Chris Bedding, who remained outside the building, told AAP Mr Porter left the office when the group arrived.

Mr Porter has been sought for comment.

It comes after a protest last week in which two people were removed from a hanging tent four storeys above the Subiaco office of Foreign Minister Julie Bishop.

Cornerstone Church pastor Jarrod McKenna and psychologist Delroy Bergsma spent almost seven hours peacefully urging the evacuation of Manus Island before the Tactical Response Group arrested them.

<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/church-leaders-camp-out-in-christian-porters-office-in-manus-island-refugee-protest/news-story/9653064a2990164e22d3952c8340fe04>

22. Nick McKim went to Manus 'to foment violence', George Brandis says

Greens senator and attorney general trade barbs in first question time for new Senate president Scott Ryan

The Guardian
Katharine Murphy Political editor
Monday 13 November 2017 17.28 AEDT

George Brandis has accused the Greens senator Nick McKim of going to Manus Island with the "explicit purpose of fomenting violence" while the detention facility was being closed down.

In acrimonious exchanges during Senate question time, the two men traded barbs over deteriorating conditions on Manus Island, with McKim declaring the Turnbull government had "blood on its hands", and the attorney general accusing McKim of "despicable and contemptible" behaviour.

The clash was part of a testing first question time for the new Senate president, Scott Ryan, with MPs deliberately pushing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in the chamber, either through rolling points of order or repeated interjections.

Over a series of questions, McKim asked Brandis when the government would intervene on Manus Island to restore power and water, or when the detainees would be moved to New Zealand, which has offered to take 150 asylum seekers.

Brandis hit back sharply. He said the ALP was responsible for establishing the facility on Manus, and the people with blood on their hands "are the people who stood by when 1,200 or more men, women and children drowned".

The United Nations human rights committee has urged Australia to immediately close its offshore detention centres and bring the refugees and asylum seekers to Australia or another safe country.

Hundreds of detainees on Manus Island have remained in the now closed facility without food, water or medical supplies for almost a fortnight.

The New Zealand prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, has offered to take some detainees. Over the weekend Ardern said "there is harm being done".

"I see the human face of this and I see the need and the role New Zealand needs to play. I think it's clear that we don't see what's happening there as acceptable, that's why the offer's there."

Ardern has flagged her intention to raise the issue with Malcolm Turnbull when the two meet at the East Asia summit taking place in the Philippines.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/13/nick-mckim-went-to-manus-to-foment-violence-george-brandis-says>

23. Manus Island: Immigration officials destroying water supplies as pressure to leave ramps up

ABC News Online

By Liam Fox on Manus Island

Posted Monday November 13, 2017 at 3:49pm

Immigration officials have returned to the Manus Island detention centre to destroy water supplies and makeshift shelters, increasing pressure on the men inside to leave.

The renewed push comes close to two weeks after the detention centre officially closed and as another deadline for asylum seekers and refugees still inside to leave passes.

"Our advice to them is that common sense must prevail," Manus Police Commander David Yapu said on Monday.

"They must leave the centre and go to the locations where there are services available for them."

On Sunday night, Commander Yapu said Monday was "the deadline" for men to leave the detention centre.

But he said police would not use force to remove the 379 men who are still inside.

Men inside the detention centre have posted numerous videos and photos on social media showing the renewed push to make them leave.

Some show the officials pulling down makeshift shelters, and others show them smashing taps on large water tanks and water gushing from broken fixtures.

Officials also filled in water wells the men had dug with dirt and rubbish.

Police said they would not forcibly remove the men still in the centre and would allow so-called "voluntary" transfers to continue, despite threats to use force previously.

"We have been given instructions from our authorities not to use any force," Commander Yapu said.

Commander Yapu said about 100 men left the centre over the weekend.

Thirteen days have passed since the Manus centre was officially closed and food, power and water supplies were cut off.

Asylum seekers and refugees who were choosing to stay inside the now-closed centre had raised fears for their safety if they left.

Recent pictures show one of the three alternative accommodation sites is still under construction.

Security fences appear to be only partially erected, possibly adding to the men's fears about safety.

Given the refugees and asylum seekers' determination to stay despite the terrible conditions, it is hard to see this stand off coming to an end any time soon.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-13/manus-island-standoff-continues-water-supplies-destroyed/9145528>

24. Fears Manus health services will struggle to cope with hundreds of refugees

As refugees move into what may be a third week without water or power in the detention centre, the focus now turns on the capacity of the local hospital to provide medical attention.

SBS World News
By Stefan Armbruster
Wednesday November 15, 2017

Authorities in Papua New Guinea fear already over-stretched health services on Manus island will not cope with hundreds of refugees.

Every bed is full in the Manus general hospital where the hundreds of refugees are expected to go for medical care once they're all out of Australia's former detention centre.

About 400 men still remain inside refusing to leave more than two weeks after power, water and food were stopped, and Australia handed control over the PNG.

"They just check what you have for sickness and then they say they will write some prescription and you go to the public hospital," said Tamil refugee Nagaraj Govindaraj on Manus.

He moved from the decommissioned off-shore processing centre before it shut down to the transit accommodation as authorities asked.

Mr Govindaraj has mental health issues and feels abandoned.

The refugees were promised an allowance of about 100 kina (A\$40) a week if they moved.

"After the camp closed they didn't give any medicines," Mr Govindaraj told SBS News.

"I come here three weeks ago, I haven't received any money. I feel sick. If I need any medicine and I want to go public hospital, if they are out of medicine, I don't have any option to buy."

The dispensary only carries the basics and is often out of stock and the only pharmacy in Lorengau town is expensive.

The main hospital on Manus island, built and not upgraded since the 1970s, is also the only one, and is already at double capacity.

The two adult wards were designed for 10 people each, but currently hold 36 patients - and sometimes more. There is no mental health clinic.

Hospital sources said six doctors and one psychiatric nurse work on Manus serving a population of about 50,000 people.

"Already we lose six people here [on Manus], we don't want to lose any more so the 420 people at Lombrum [former detention centre] work hard too help us," said Mr Govindaraj in support of the continuing stand-off.

PNG's top military, police, immigration and health officials says they are concerned about an impending public health emergency at the former detention centre.

"We are implementing the provisional health authority inspection report that says the centre is unhygienic and is subject to illness such as waterborne diseases typhoid cholera and dysentery," said Manus Provincial Police Commander David Yapu.

Those who have relocated to the new West Lorengau transit accommodation say they are living in filth.

Australia's prime minister described the three transit centres in Lorengau on Tuesday as "very adequate alternative facilities".

New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Arden has again offered to resettle 150 refugees saying "out offer remains on the table, it remains on the table because the need remains".

Australia's handling of the process has been heavily criticised by the UN.

Ms Arden's is also now offering up to \$3 million in aid to help care for those on Manus Island before they are resettled.

“We intend to work with PNG and other agencies like the International Red Cross to financially support them with any additional needs that may need to be met, while those refugees remain on the island,” she said.

Ms Ardern continues to reject calls to deal directly with PNG, insisting any resettlement to New Zealand will involve Australia.

“They hold the information, they are the ones who are presiding over the process,” she said.

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/11/15/fears-manus-health-services-will-struggle-cope-hundreds-refugees>

25. Australian activists vow to press on with pro-refugee Manus protests

Group whose members scaled Sydney Opera House and protested at Melbourne Cup says public's 'empathy is switched on'

The Guardian

Christopher Knaus

Monday 13 November 2017 12.11 AEDT

The treatment of refugees stranded in Australia's newly closed offshore detention camp has prompted calls for a global sporting and tourism boycott, as activists vow to continue nationwide protests.

Australian activists staged a series of protests last week over the unfolding situation on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea, where the government has sent hundreds of refugees who attempted to reach the country by boat.

Last week protesters scaled the Sydney Opera House, disrupted the nation's biggest horse race, blockaded the offices of the Australian Border Force, and targeted the conservative former prime minister, Tony Abbott, and the immigration minister, Peter Dutton, at a public event.

Members of the Whistleblowers, Activists and Citizens Alliance scaled the Opera House on Thursday, unfurling banners that decried the situation on Manus.

The same group climbed a crane at the Melbourne Cup on Tuesday, displaying banners above the city's Flemington racecourse calling for an evacuation of the refugees. Protesters also drove a car on to train tracks near Flemington, causing delays to racegoers and the arrest of one woman.

Protesters barricaded the offices of the Australian Border Force and staged sit-ins and protests in most larger cities across the country.

Sam Castro, a spokeswoman for the alliance, said the protests were not coordinated but were spurred by a collective sense of urgency about the deteriorating situation on Manus.

“I just feel like people, finally their empathy is switched on,” she told the Guardian. “I just think people are really angry.

“We knew what was coming, we know that they're prepared to let those men die.”

The detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island was deemed illegal by the PNG supreme court early last year and the centre officially closed late last month.

Water supplies, food, and electricity have all been switched off but hundreds of the camp's residents remain, fearing for their safety beyond the wire fence and criticising a lack of suitable alternative accommodation. The PNG government has told the residents they must leave on Monday or face forcible eviction.

The UN is warning of a “looming humanitarian emergency” and Australian activists, seeking to avoid tragedy, are calling for the men to be brought to Australia.

Australia, despite sending the refugees to the island, has sought to deflect responsibility for the situation to the PNG government. Malcolm Turnbull called on the refugees to move to alternative accommodation, despite reports it is not ready.

“The decision to close the Manus [regional processing centre] was taken by Papua New Guinea,” the prime minister said on Friday. “It is, after all, in Papua New Guinea. It is their country.

“So it is very clear what the law of Papua New Guinea is saying and the people that are remaining in the centre should move to other facilities which have got everything that they need – food, water, security, healthcare – all of that is there. And comply with PNG law.”

Previous protests have been successful in changing the national discourse about Australia's immigration detention regime, Castro said, including focusing on the involvement and complicity of the Labor opposition, which reopened the Manus centre in 2012.

In November last year chanting alliance members glued their hands to a railing and disrupted question time in Australia's House of Representatives in Canberra. The group had previously chained themselves to Dutton's Brisbane offices and disrupted a speech by Turnbull in August.

The author and journalist Antony Loewenstein is attempting to open up another front in the campaign against offshore detention. He has argued for some time that an international boycott of Australia over Manus is a key way to pressure the government. He wants to see a sporting and tourism boycott, and a boycott of companies "profiting from onshore and offshore detention".

"Protest is vital but the old methods have failed to change decades of bipartisan support for mandatory detention of asylum seekers and other human rights violations," Loewenstein told the Guardian.

Sustained activism has not, so far, led to any substantive change in policy.

"The polls, everything keeps showing that people see that these are concentration camps, and we shouldn't be doing this," Castro said. "But it's almost like Teflon, it doesn't matter how much the discourse changes, Peter Dutton just keeps lying."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/nov/13/australian-activists-vow-to-press-on-with-pro-refugee-manus-protests>

26. MEDIA RELEASE: Manus defiant as police vandalise tanks and wells

Monday November 13, 2017
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul
mobile 0417 275 713

After 13 days, over 420 refugees and asylum seekers are desperately defying Dutton's siege of the Manus detention centre. (Photos attached are of the protests inside the detention centre on 11 November and the video clip of the protest on 12 November).

This morning, Monday 13 November, a large number of PNG police and Immigration officials entered the detention centre attempting to destroy the water wells that the refugees have been relying on for the last 13 days. (Photos attached)

The officials also overturned more containers of collected rain water in a repeat of the bully-boy raids they made last Friday.

In more acts of wanton vandalism, police punctured water tanks to deprive the refugees of the last remaining amount after the pipes were cut last week. And more tents and property are being destroyed throughout the camp.

"The reckless brutality being orchestrated by Peter Dutton has to end," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"After four years of unlawful detention, the refugees and asylum seekers are not about to be forced into yet another detention centre."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

27. Some Nauru staff flown out and more could follow, detention sources say

There have been reports that some case managers, sport and recreation staff, and teachers were flown out on Friday with little explanation

The Guardian
Helen Davidson
Saturday 18 November 2017 09.54 AEDT

Staff at the Nauru detention centre have been flown off the island in a confusing and sudden apparent end to their employment, detention sources have said.

Sources on Nauru told the Guardian dozens of staff had already been deported, with more expected to leave the island on Saturday. The reason for the departure was not clear.

However, some staff have been told in an email from a service provider that there is "no longer accommodation available in RPC1 so due to shortage some staff are being flown home temporarily".

RPC 1 contains accommodation for staff as well as for asylum seekers who need extra care and support.

There is no indication the supported accommodation for asylum seekers has been withdrawn but several sources have reported that some case managers, sport and recreation staff, and teachers were flown out on Friday with little explanation.

The affected staff members are employed by Wilsons and Canstruct, which was recently granted a tender to provide services on Nauru after Transfield did not renew its contract with the Australian government.

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection would only confirm that there was "currently some movement of DIBP and contracted staff between accommodation facilities on Nauru".

"This will not affect basic services for refugees and asylum seekers," the spokesman said.

Asylum seekers and refugees remain on Nauru, but many have sought access to resettlement with the US under a deal struck by the Australian government and Obama administration.

So far, only about 50 have been processed and resettled. An offer by the New Zealand government to take 150 refugees from Manus Island and Nauru has been repeatedly rejected by Australia, which says it wants to make use of the US deal first.

As part of an effort to clear refugees from the Manus Island detention centre, they were also given the opportunity to seek transfer to Nauru, which offers residency visas to refugees for only 10 years.

Only a few took up the offer, and the centre is now engaged in a standoff – detainees are refusing to leave and the authorities are preventing access to food, water and other essential services.

The international community and human rights organisations have condemned Australia's actions regarding the Manus developments.

Both detention centres have attracted widespread international condemnation over many years for the living conditions and treatment of asylum seekers and refugees.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/18/some-nauru-staff-flown-out-and-more-likely-to-follow-detention-sources-say>

28. Nauru refugee regime to cost taxpayers \$385 million over next 12 months

Sydney Morning Herald
November 21 2017
Michael Koziol

A Queensland construction firm and Liberal Party donor, picked to run refugee services on Australia's behalf in Nauru, will be paid \$385 million by taxpayers over the next 12 months.

Canstruct has replaced Broadspectrum as the Australian government's key contractor on the Pacific island, providing garrison and welfare services to more than 1000 refugees.

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So far, only about 54 refugees have been accepted for resettlement in the United States – the main mechanism by which the government hopes to get people off Nauru and Manus Island.

Government sources have indicated it could be 12 months, or potentially longer, before the US finishes vetting up to 1250 refugees for potential resettlement.

At the same time, sources close to the Nauru operation have told Fairfax Media numerous staff on the island have been ordered to leave for reasons unknown.

A Department of Immigration and Border Protection spokesperson confirmed "there has been some movement of DIBP and contracted staff between accommodation facilities on Nauru", but said: "this will not affect basic services for refugees and asylum seekers".

The Guardian reported "dozens" of staff had already left the island and more were expected to follow. It is not unusual for Nauru to deport people working in the refugee regime - two Wilson Security officers were deported earlier this year, allegedly for flouting immigration laws.

Canstruct, through Mercer PR (which also works with the Government of Nauru), referred questions to the Immigration Department.

The Brisbane-based construction firm rebuilt the Nauru detention centre after it was partially destroyed by fire during a 2013 riot. Canstruct is now the only firm willing to provide garrison and welfare services on Nauru after Broadspectrum and Serco declined.

But the company lacks experience in the provision of welfare services, as revealed at a Senate estimates hearing last month. Department assistant secretary David Nockels said Canstruct had "extensive experience in managing mining camps, so they have experience delivering the garrison-type services that we require". Most of the welfare provision was handled by the Nauruan government through another contractor, Mr Nockels said.

It was also revealed the company had donated to Forward Brisbane Leadership, a former fundraising outfit associated with the Liberal Party in Queensland.

Immigration Secretary Mike Pezzullo indicated the donation was not a relevant probity concern, but acknowledged the amount to be expended with Canstruct was "a large sum of money".

"We're very careful with every single dollar of the taxpayers' money that we get," he said.

Tender documents show Broadspectrum was paid more than \$2.5 billion to run garrison support and welfare services across both Nauru and Manus Island between March 2014 and October 2017.

Last week Fairfax Media reported the Australian government paid Toll Group \$8.1 million for just 24 days' work upgrading an accommodation facility on Manus Island.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has previously said the high cost of Australia's offshore processing regime is the consequence of "cleaning up the mess" of Labor's border policies, which led the Rudd/Gillard governments to reopen Manus and Nauru.

The Nauruan government on Monday said it had welcomed a number of refugees from Manus Island who had taken up an offer to transfer while awaiting a resettlement offer from the US.

The country's multicultural affairs minister, David Adeang, did not provide numbers but took the opportunity to blast refugee advocates for painting a false picture of life on the island.

"There are hundreds of workers on Nauru purely dedicated to looking after refugees and asylum seekers," he said. "There is a lack of interest in presenting the truth of Nauru and what Nauru has done to provide refugees and asylum seekers with a peaceful temporary home."

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/nauru-refugee-regime-to-cost-taxpayers-385-million-over-next-12-months-20171120-gzore9.html>

29. MEDIA RELEASE: Urgent surgery needed for brain-injured refugee on Nauru

Saturday November 18, 2017
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

A 28 year-old Rohingya refugee injured in a motorbike accident on Nauru this morning around 7.00am has been unconscious in the RON hospital since this afternoon.

The accident between two motorbikes, happened on the Fly Camp Rd, the same road where a refugee was killed on 2 November.

It is understood that doctors believe the man needs urgent surgery to deal with a clot or bleeding on his brain. He was vomiting blood and had bleeding from his right ear before he lapsed into unconsciousness.

Other refugees on the island do not believe that Nauru is equipped to perform the brain surgery need, but no arrangements have been made for the man to be medivaced for urgent treatment.

People on the island are also concerned that the current dispute between Border Force and the Nauru government that has seen the Nauru government expel 107 Canstruct workers from the island in the last 24 hours has paralysed administration on the island and is delaying the decision to provide the urgent treatment he needs. The injured refugee is a Canstruct worker.

The dispute between Border Force and the Nauru government is over rent (believed to be over \$3.5 million a year) that Border Force has been paying for space in the Menen Hotel (owned by the Nauruan government) for various activities.

"We have grave fears for the life of this refugee. He needs urgent surgery; any delay could be a matter of life and death," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"Border Force cannot shrug off its responsibility for this man's welfare. We are calling on Peter Dutton to ensure that a money-squabble with Nauru is not going to cost this refugee his life."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

30. Grave fears for Rohingya refugee injured in Nauru motorbike crash

Refugee advocates say 28-year-old needs urgent treatment amid concerns Nauru is ill-equipped to perform the brain surgery required

The Guardian
Australian Associated Press
Sunday 19 November 2017 12.15 AEDT

A refugee living in Australia's offshore detention centre on Nauru has been seriously injured in a motorbike crash, on the same road where another refugee was killed earlier this month.

The 28-year-old Rohingya refugee was hospitalised after colliding with another motorcycle on Saturday afternoon.

"The department can confirm a refugee in Nauru was involved in a motorcycle accident," an Australian immigration spokesperson said. "The refugee is receiving appropriate medical care. Further questions should be directed to the government of Nauru."

Ian Rintoul from the Refugee Action Coalition holds grave fears for the man's life, while other refugees on the island don't believe Nauru is equipped to perform the brain surgery required.

Rintoul says no arrangements have been made for the man to be medically evacuated for treatment.

"He needs urgent surgery; any delay could be a matter of life and death," he said on Sunday.

A 29-year-old Bangladeshi man was killed on 2 November after the motorcycle he was travelling on collided with another vehicle.

Nauruan authorities have been contacted for comment.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/19/rohingyan-refugee-nauru-motorbike-crash>

31. Australia 'overriding' doctors' request to transfer injured Rohingya refugee from Nauru

Doctors for Refugees claims the government is stopping an injured Rohingya refugee on Nauru from receiving the treatment he needs.

SBS News
Wednesday November 22, 2017
By Andrea Booth

The Australian Border Force (ABF) is not listening to the request of doctors on Nauru to urgently transfer an injured Rohingya refugee to Australia, the president of advocacy group Doctors for Refugees has told SBS News.

"Yet again we see the ABF overriding the medical opinions of the treating doctors, in this case the doctors in Nauru and Nauru Hospital itself," Dr Barri Phatarfod said.

Abu Bakar, a 28-year-old from Myanmar, sustained injuries to his head after a motorcycle accident at the weekend on the island, where the Australian government's offshore asylum seeker processing centre is located.

Local doctors have said Mr Bakar requires urgent surgery, according to Dr Phatarfod. The ABC reported on Tuesday the Nauru Hospital had made a formal request for a transfer.

Dr Phatarfod told the ABC on Tuesday Mr Bakar was "bleeding from his ear, vomiting — these are really, really ominous signs of a moderate to severe brain injury".

"He could die," she said.

Doctors for Refugees obtained his medical records which show an Australian-based neurosurgeon and faciomaxillary (face, mouth and jaws) surgeon also reviewed his CT scans and stated on the basis of these that he didn't need immediate surgery.

But the surgeons, who did not include their names on the report, added, "clinical correlation is strongly recommended", meaning there can't be an accurate appraisal of a person's injuries without seeing them.

"Neither of these surgeons left Australia to examine him in Nauru," Dr Phatarfod said. "Neither specialist has made any comment about whether or not he should be transferred."

SBS News is awaiting clarification from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection about whether it employed them to conduct this assessment.

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/11/22/australia-overriding-doctors-request-transfer-injured-rohingya-refugee-nauru>

32. Australia urged to 'respect the court' by lawyer for Indonesians detained over people smuggling

ABC News Online
By Indonesia bureau chief Samantha Hawley
Tuesday November 14, 2017

The lawyer representing dozens of Indonesians who allege they were wrongly jailed in adult prisons has urged the Australian Government to respect the Indonesian judicial system.

The class action against Australia involves 115 Indonesians who allege they were underage when they were jailed and held in detention centres for people smuggling.

Their lawyers, including Lisa Hiariej, are seeking \$103 million in damages in a civil court with proceedings first beginning in February.

Judges presiding over the case expressed frustration at continual delays, while on Tuesday, Ms Hiariej said she was concerned the Australian Government was trying to slow the court process.

Outside the Central Jakarta District Court, Ms Hiariej said:

"This is the Indonesian way, the Indonesian court, you have to respect the Indonesians."

"This is not really good, they want to take a longer time."

During Tuesday's hearing, lawyers for the Australian Government argued they did not have the power of attorney to argue on any grounds apart from the jurisdiction of the court.

Chief judge Ibnu Widodo said it was the first time he had ever come across the arrangement, with lawyers normally engaged for the entirety of a case.

He ordered the parties return to court on November 28 and be prepared to argue about the accusations, if the panel of three judges ruled on hearing the case.

The Indonesians were allegedly detained in Australia between 2008 and 2012 on people smuggling charges after being determined to be adults by now completely discredited wrist X-rays.

They are suing the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and the Attorney-General's Department.

The Australian Government argues that, as a sovereign state, Australia is not subject to the court's jurisdiction and has delivered an 18-page document to the court outlining the reasons.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-14/australia-urged-to-respect-the-indonesian-court-by-lawyer/9150938>

33. US once locked up white Australian immigrants in 'horror' camps akin to Manus and Nauru

From late 1921 until 1965, US immigration restrictions meant Anglo Australians who were used to crossing borders with ease were instead detained and expelled like hardened criminals

The Guardian
Anne Rees for the Conversation
Monday 20 November 2017 11.57 AEDT

Lurking behind the debates about offshore processing lies a little-known historical irony: white Australians were once locked up in immigration centres that bore a striking resemblance to the Manus Island and Nauru detention centres, which were recently harshly criticised by the UN human rights committee. And unsurprisingly, they were far from happy about it.

Back in 1921, the United States introduced immigration restrictions based on national quotas. The quotas were tightened in 1924, and again in 1929, and remained in place until 1965.

The restrictions were part of a racist program to close the borders to “undesirable” migrants, but they carried the pretence of being colour-blind. As a result, these quotas affected even Australia – a fellow “white man’s country” that proudly advertised its own White Australia policy and boasted of a 98% British population.

Australians of that era violently protested their restriction and the traumatising border detention that followed. Yet today’s Australians have been more than willing to subject refugees and asylum seekers to similar (or worse) treatment. There is also one key difference: Australian immigrants detained and deported in 1920s America were not admissible under US law, whereas it is perfectly legal to seek asylum.

From July 1921 Australia’s quota for US immigration came out at a measly 279, later reduced to 100 – far less than the tens of thousands allocated to more populous nations.

Prior to this point, white Australians had enjoyed a virtually unfettered right to roam the globe. As British subjects, who travelled on British passports, Anglo Australians could move at will around the still vast British empire. They also typically enjoyed a warm welcome in the US.

The situation was different for the small number of non-Anglo Australians, who faced many more restrictions on their mobility. Chinese Australians, for example, had long been excluded from the US by virtue of their “Chinese race”.

Coming at a time when Anglo Australians were used to crossing borders with ease, the US restrictions came as a shock. At first, they were effectively ignored, but it soon transpired that the quotas would be strictly enforced.

Within months, Australians who ventured to the States in excess of the quota were being detained and deported. In almost all cases, these were not shady underworld figures, but respectable citizens who had casually disregarded or misunderstood the new law. From late 1921, dozens of prosperous and even high-profile Australians would be locked up and expelled like hardened criminals.

Australians were incensed by this. Because they were white – and therefore “desirable” immigrants – they expected to be welcomed with open arms. When they were imprisoned instead, Australian newspaper headlines complained of “unfair treatment” and “innocent victims”.

Although Australians were in fact treated no worse – and often much better – than other restricted migrants, they assumed their racial privilege should place them above the law. As one Brisbane newspaper protested, Australia had been “ranked with such not wanted nations as Chinese, Japanese, Bulgarians and Turks”.

The horrors of Ellis Island

One of these Australian “illegal aliens” was Reginald Reynolds, who spent a week incarcerated on Ellis Island in 1922 after being detained on arrival in New York. Alongside 40 men “of all nationalities”, Reynolds spent the night in a dormitory with “doors and windows barred”. He was served “dry bread” for dinner and awoke covered in flea bites.

As a prosperous white man accustomed to deference, Reynolds did not take his detention lightly. He sent word to family in London, who complained to the US consul and Australian high commissioner. A graphic letter detailing the “horrors of Ellis Island” was syndicated in the Australian and New Zealand press. “Here in New York we get treated like so many dogs,” Reynolds told his fellow Australasians.

Reynolds’ concerns were shared by his compatriots detained on Angel Island, the immigration station in San Francisco Bay. The detention facilities were so primitive that one group of Australians renamed the site “Devil’s Island”. Babies were dying in dormitories, overcrowding was rife, and white detainees experienced the perceived insult of eating and sleeping alongside people of colour.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/nov/20/us-once-locked-up-white-australian-immigrants-in-horror-camps-akin-to-manus-and-nauru>