

Project SafeCom News and Updates

Wednesday, 28 February 2018

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1. The Saturday Paper Editorial: Hypocrite to child's care

The Saturday Paper
Edition No. 193
February 24 – March 2, 2018

It is almost clichéd to criticise Peter Dutton. The man is a moral void. His actions as a minister have debased this parliament. He is a cartoon of overreach and indifference, the proud jailer of innocent refugees.

It is a grotesque spectacle that this man now seeks to interfere in the education of children, that he is willing to use children to start a sly war over nationalistic values.

In his first major speech as minister for Home Affairs, a position that should never have been created and much less given to him, Dutton argued that children should “talk more about our story, about our history and our core values”.

He wants children to pledge their allegiance to Australia, a process that dresses up its jingoism as a kind of inclusion. “In my view,” he says, “there is a place for the pledge in a broader rejuvenated civics effort with school-aged children, regardless of their background.”

As minister for immigration, Dutton is directly responsible for the children imprisoned on Nauru. He has failed them. He has ignored credible reports of rape, ignored self-harm. He has divided families to see if they will break. For political gain, he has stolen childhoods. These are years and lives that will never be got back.

This is the man who now seeks to dragoon schoolchildren into his culture war, who claims the capacity to teach values. He cannot be trusted with this.

Against all advice, Malcolm Turnbull created a super ministry for Dutton. This is the tenuousness of his leadership. The prime minister would sooner disfigure this country's security agencies than risk his hold on power.

Dutton lives in a fantasy of control. He wants facial scans and the rote learning of identity. Like most demagogues, he operates without an intellectual frame. His only guide is his own shamelessness.

In criticising the country's judiciary, he disgraces the traditions of our democracy. In torturing refugees – and it is torture – he turns this country in from the world. His borders are a kind of cage, to keep out reality.

Dutton has militarised once-open bureaucracies. He now threatens the independence of our spy agencies. He has the brute simplicity of the Queensland cop he never stopped being.

The Australia Dutton hopes for is a horrific one – a fantasy place without private reflection or independent thought, a place of constant surveillance and enforced values. His fetish is for a uniformed dystopia.

This may seem hyperbolic. But the horrors of the Nauru files would seem hyperbolic if they were not also true. The misery of those documents, the beatings and rapes and deprivations, should see anyone responsible drummed from the parliament and the damage done by them righted and righted urgently.

In the Australia of Turnbull's cowardice, however, those same documents are a brief for promotion. We live in the paradox of a man without morals seeking to teach them.

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/2018/02/24/hypocrite-childs-care/15193908005843>

2. Human rights group slams Turnbull's record

Amnesty International is demanding Malcolm Turnbull and Donald Trump renounce their “hateful” policies, as the two men prepare to meet at the White House.

Australian Associated Press
February 22, 2018 4:01pm
Peter Mitchell, AAP US Correspondent

Australia's human rights record has been slammed on the eve of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's White House meeting with US President Donald Trump.

Amnesty International, in its annual global assessment of human rights, accused Australia of “dog-whistling and hate-filled narratives” that encouraged bigotry and discrimination against marginalised groups.

Australia is also accused of subjecting asylum-seekers and refugees to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and the justice system failing indigenous people with high rates of incarceration, especially children.

"Australia's abusive treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum is once again a shameful stain on our country's human rights record," Amnesty International Australia national director Claire Mallinson told AAP.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/human-rights-group-slams-turnbulls-record/news-story/93406133b823b999c4718ca323d019e6>

3. UN Officials Warn Australia Against Imposing "Extreme Penalties" For Journalists

Three United Nations rapporteurs warn Australia's laws will have a chilling effect on investigative reporting.

Paul Farrell
BuzzFeed Senior Reporter, Australia
Posted on February 19, 2018, 00:29 GMT

A powerful group of United Nations officials have called on the Australian government to reconsider proposed secrecy laws, warning that they risk chilling the work of journalists, deterring whistleblowers and expose journalists and human rights activists to prosecution.

The Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull has announced a broad package of reforms aimed at curbing foreign interference from countries including China and Russia.

But the proposal also includes major reforms to Australia's secrecy laws, that appear to be aimed at curbing whistleblowers like Edward Snowden, and organisations such as WikiLeaks.

Under the proposed new regime, two existing secrecy offences will be repealed entirely and replaced by several new offences inserted into the Commonwealth Criminal Code.

While a seven-year jail sentence is the maximum available under the existing laws, this will be increased to 20 years.

The new laws will apply to anyone, not just government officials. They could easily apply to journalists and organisations, including WikiLeaks, that "communicate" or "deal" with information. They will also close a longstanding gap around contractors working on behalf of government agencies, who will also be subject to the new offences.

The United Nations special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression David Kaye, the special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism, Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin, and the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, send a joint communique to the Australian government on Friday warning that the bill risked violating a number of rights guaranteed under international law.

"We are gravely concerned that the Bill would impose draconian criminal penalties on expression and access to information that is central to public debate and accountability in a democratic society," they wrote.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.buzzfeed.com/paulfarrell/un-officials-warn-australia-against-imposing-extreme>

4. 'Race to the bottom': Trump and Turnbull urged to end refugee limbo

Canberra Times
February 23 2018 - 10:56AM
David Crowe

One of the world's peak refugee groups is calling on Malcolm Turnbull and Donald Trump to extend their agreement to resettle refugees in the United States while warning of the "unconscionable" treatment of those who may be left behind.

As Mr Turnbull prepares to meet the US president in the White House, refugee advocates are lobbying for a bigger intake by the Trump administration to resettle people from Manus Island and Nauru.

The president of Refugees International, Eric Schwartz, warned that Australia could lead a "race to the bottom" on the treatment of refugees unless it found a new solution for those left on Manus and Nauru after the US completes its intake.

"We don't want Australia to be leading the race to the bottom on refugee protection," he told this newspaper.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/race-to-the-bottom-trump-and-turnbull-urged-to-end-refugee-limbo-20180222-p4z1em.html>

5. THE MONTHLY LONG READ: Dutton's Dark Victory: The minister, Pezzullo and the demise of Immigration

The Monthly
February 2018
James Button

It's a fine December morning in the northern Canberra suburb of Belconnen, and in the cafe opposite the Department of Home Affairs a crowd watches the busy barista. His black T-shirt says "Weapon of a security warrior", and as he calls out names for coffees he reads "Walter White", and theatrically rolls his eyes. Men and women wearing lanyards return to the office with their coffees and that unhurried public service walk that suggests no ripple will ever disturb the smooth surface of Australian administrative life. Nothing except, perhaps, the large sign behind the front desk that they pass before touching their security passes at the electronic gate: "Australia's current National Terrorism Threat Level is PROBABLE."

A day earlier, this was the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, but now it is called the Department of Home Affairs, and I am here to interview its head, Secretary Michael Pezzullo.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2018/february/1517403600/james-button/dutton-s-dark-victory>

6. Fears privatised visa system could see access to Australia 'sold to highest bidder'

Union warns up to 3,000 jobs and private information at risk under proposal that could include 'premium services for high-value applicants'

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Mon 26 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

Government plans to privatise the visa application system could include "premium services for high-value applicants", different access for those able to pay more, as well as "commercial value-added services".

The Community and Public Sector Union has warned the changes – the department's preferred option is to have all visa applications decided via an online platform – could cost up to 3,000 jobs and jeopardise the security of people's private information.

The home affairs minister, Peter Dutton, has said the proposal's rationale is to modernise Australia's visa system to deal with a massive and growing number of applications, but the Greens senator Nick McKim said the proposal could see a fatal corruption of the integrity of Australia's visa system with "access to Australia packaged up and sold to the highest bidder"

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/26/fears-privatised-visa-system-could-see-access-to-australia-sold-to-highest-bidder>

7. Mal Byrne: A lonely death in Adelaide's leafy suburbs

At a small and heartbreaking funeral in suburban Tasmore, Adelaide lawyer Mal Byrne says he grasped the full horror of the damage wrought by Australia's immigration detention system.

InDaily, South Australia
ADELAIDE, Thursday February 08, 2018
Mal Byrne / Tindall Gask Bentley

His name was Aref. He died in November 2017 at the age of 47. He was my client. He died alone in his unit tucked away in the leafy eastern suburbs of Adelaide. It was several days before his body was found. He died of natural causes, a heart attack or stroke.

While he was my client, I never met him in person. I spoke to him on the phone several times. He would make appointments to see me, but he would never attend.

In the months before he died, he stopped answering his phone. I thought about going to his unit, knocking on the door and hope that he would let me in. I do not know how he would have reacted. Perhaps, he would have shown me his art like he did other visitors. He liked to paint. I imagine that it was some sort of therapy.

What I did not realise until Aref died was how miserable his circumstances had become.

FULL STORY AT <https://indaily.com.au/opinion/2018/02/08/lonely-death-adelaides-leafy-suburbs/>

8. Australia's Privacy Watchdog Wants To Hear From Asylum Seekers Affected By A Major Data Breach

Compensation for the group of almost 10,000 people affected could reach millions of dollars.

Paul Farrell
BuzzFeed
January 25, 2018, at 7:01 a.m.

Australia's privacy commissioner is inviting asylum seekers held in detention that were affected by a catastrophic data breach in 2014 to contact his office, in a landmark case that could see millions in compensation awarded to people affected by the breach.

In February 2014 the Guardian revealed the immigration department had accidentally disclosed the personal details of almost 10,000 people held in detention. The immigration minister at the time, Scott Morrison, described the breach as "unacceptable".

The details included the names, nationalities, location, arrival date and identification number. It included every person held in a mainland detention facility and on Christmas Island, as well as several thousand in community detention.

An investigation by the privacy commissioner Timothy Pilgrim found that the department breached Australia's privacy laws in several ways, and had failed to develop procedures and safeguards for publishing information online.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.buzzfeed.com/paulfarrell/australias-privacy-watchdog-wants-to-hear-from-asylum>

9. Canberra's other office affair remains shrouded in mystery

ABC News
By Defence reporter Andrew Greene
Updated February 13, 2018 15:01:43

In the midst of the Barnaby Joyce revelations last week, one of Canberra's highest profile public officials reached an inauspicious milestone.

Australian Border Force Commissioner Roman Quaedvlieg is believed to have now accrued more than \$400,000 in salary payments while on leave, as an external investigation into his personal conduct drags on into a new year.

The case of the missing Commissioner who's still on a \$619,905 remuneration package is shrouded in mystery, and has again put into sharp focus the standards applied to public officials as opposed to their political masters.

Under Senate estimates questioning last October, then-Immigration Department secretary Mike Pezzullo publicly confirmed the few facts that are known about the ABF's Commissioner's extended paid leave, which is now into at least its ninth month.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-13/canberras-other-office-affair-remains-shrouded-in-mystery/9434424>

10. Fair, thorough and thoroughly decent, Michael Gordon's trick was no trick at all

Canberra Times
February 4 2018 - 8:56PM
Mark Kenny

Driving through the rural town of Cowes on Saturday morning, Russell Broadbent spotted the beaming smile of Michael Gordon among competitors limbering up for the annual Phillip Island Penguin Swim Classic.

Gordon was "in his element", raring to go. Broadbent had things to do but knew he would be home in time for Gordon's post-race visit. "He always came by afterwards."

Except this time, he didn't. The 62-year-old never made it back off the beach, suffering a fatal heart attack as he neared the end of the swim.

It was the last time Broadbent, a federal Liberal MP, saw his close friend, a man he revered as a deep thinker, and lodestar of federal political reporting.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/fair-thorough-and-thoroughly-decent-michael-gordon-s-trick-was-no-trick-at-all-20180204-p4yzdh.html>

11. PROFILE: Batman's going Green, Alex Bhathal signals, as progressive agenda resonates

The Guardian
Calla Wahlquist
Tue 27 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

"I have got a lot of respect for Ged, but over decades of involvement in politics and campaigning I have seen a lot of people, impressive people, come in and try to change Labor," she says. "And you know what? Labor changes them."

Concern about Australia's asylum policies is one of the main reasons voters have switched to the Greens.

Bhathal herself is a "Tampa Green" who joined the party after the former prime minister John Howard refused permission for the MV Tampa, which was carrying 433 refugees picked up from a sinking fishing boat, to enter Australian waters in 2001.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/27/alex-bhathal-signals-batman-by-election-going-green>

12. AMNESTY REPORT: Manus Island: Australia abandons refugees to a life of uncertainty and peril

Amnesty website
1 February 2018, 12:09 UTC

The Australian government has abandoned hundreds of refugees and asylum seekers, leaving them in a situation that more closely resembles punishment instead of protection in Papua New Guinea, Amnesty International said in a new report today.

Punishment not protection: Australia's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Papua New Guinea documents how, since refugees were forcibly evicted from a transit centre on Manus Island in November 2017, they have been moved to newer but inadequate facilities where violence from the local community remains a constant threat.

"Moving refugees and asylum seekers from one hellish situation to another is not a solution, it is just prolonging these desperate men's suffering. The new centres on Manus Island are not just a safety risk but also leave those who live there without basic services," said Kate Schuetze, Amnesty International's Pacific Researcher.

"Instead of implementing new and creative ways to shirk its responsibility and violate international law, the Australian government must end this wilful policy of cruelty and neglect. It must do the only safe and legal thing, which is to bring these men to its own shores and offer them the protection they need and deserve."

FULL STORY AT <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/02/manus-island-australia-abandons-refugees-to-a-life-of-uncertainty-and-peril/>

13. Behrouz Boochani: Living in limbo on Manus Island

Iranian journalist and refugee Boochani talks about life in detention and the closure of the Manus Island refugee camp.

Al Jazeera News
10 Feb 2018 14:54 GMT

For more than four and a half years, Kurdish-Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani has been in limbo on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

He was sent there by Australia in 2013, after he tried to reach its shores by boat.

As a journalist in Iran, Boochani published stories that promoted the Kurdish language and culture. He cofounded a Kurdish magazine, but after its offices were raided and several of his colleagues were arrested and accused of undermining the Iranian state, Boochani fled, fearing for his safety.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/inthefield/2018/02/behrouz-boochani-living-limbo-manus-island-180208113527825.html>

14. UN tells PNG it has a duty to look after refugees from Australia

Top human rights official raises issue of asylum-seeker treatment with Peter O'Neill

The Guardian
Reuters
Sat 10 Feb 2018 13.15 AEDT

Papua New Guinea has been told by the United Nations' top human rights official that it is obligated to take care of hundreds of refugees sent there by Australia.

Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, the UN high commissioner for human rights, raised the issue with the PNG prime minister, Peter O'Neill, in a meeting in Port Moresby on Friday, Zeid's spokeswoman, Ravina Shamdasani, said.

Shamdasani said Zeid and O'Neill discussed the need for PNG to ensure that refugees were living in "satisfactory" conditions with protection for their human rights.

"That is the duty of the state of Papua New Guinea to ensure that happens while they're on their territory," she said by phone from Fiji's capital, Suva, where the delegation travelled after leaving PNG.

"He will certainly be following up with Australia as well," she said.

Officials in PNG were unavailable for comment.

The refugees, from countries including Pakistan, Sudan and Iran, were trying to reach Australia by boat.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/10/un-tells-png-it-has-a-duty-to-look-after-refugees-from-australia>

15. 'It's freedom': Rohingya refugee reaches Florida after horror of Australian detention

The US has quietly admitted a handful of Australia's refugees since September of last year – but what happens if Trump cancels the arrangement?

The Guardian
Oliver Laughland in West Palm Beach, Florida
Fri 23 Feb 2018 16.01 AEDT

Down by Lake Osborne, deep in suburban Florida, there's a stillness and solitude Mamudul Hasson has not experienced in years.

Among the damp grass, tall palms and gentle humidity the 21 year-old Rohingya refugee takes a seat, staring at the ducks and lapping water. It's another world from what he left behind two weeks ago and he's still in disbelief that he made it.

"It has been a very long time since I came to a place like this: quiet, easy," he says. "It's freedom. It's the most important thing in life."

Hasson had been among the hundreds of men held by the Australian government in a notorious detention centre on remote Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. Kept in limbo for over four years, he witnessed the murder of a fellow detainee and the untimely deaths of others. He slept in a tiny shipping container with four other men, used the putrid bathrooms every day, and experienced depression.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/23/rohingya-refugee-us-australia>

16. Tamil asylum seeker to be deported after UN committee withdraws torture concerns

Committee earlier requested a halt to Shantaruban's removal from Australia

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Wed 21 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

A Tamil asylum seeker appears set for deportation to Sri Lanka after the UN committee against torture withdrew a request to Australia to halt his removal while it investigated the risk of him being tortured upon return.

Shantaruban, currently held in immigration detention in Melbourne, has been in Australia since arriving by boat in 2012. A notice of intention to remove from Australia has been issued against him for Thursday 22 February.

Shantaruban's claim for refugee status has been rejected. But he says he has been unable to properly present his claim for protection, because he was initially fearful to declare his association with the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or the Tamil Tigers.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/21/tamil-asylum-seeker-to-be-deported-after-un-committee-withdraws-torture-concerns>

17. Australia grants refugee status to Cambodians

The Australian government has granted refugee visas to the family of a murdered Cambodian political activist.

Australian Associated Press
February 20, 2018 12:07pm
Lisa Martin

Australia has granted asylum to the family of a murdered Cambodian political activist, as a deal to send refugees from Nauru to Cambodia remains in place.

The wife and five children of Kem Ley arrived in Melbourne on Saturday, the office of Victorian state MP Hong Lim confirmed.

Ley was gunned down in 2016 in a suspected political assassination.

He had made comments critical of Prime Minister Hun Sen's business dealings.

The family had spent 15 months in limbo in Thailand waiting for Australia to grant them visas.

Last week, exiled former Cambodian opposition leader Sam Rainsy questioned the process.

"It would be very embarrassing to accept refugees from Cambodia when you want to send refugees to Cambodia," Mr Rainsy told the National Press Club in Canberra.

Cambodia agreed in 2014 to resettle refugees from Nauru in exchange for a \$40 million aid sweetener.

A further \$15 million has been allocated for running costs.

Only seven people took up the offer and it's believed only three remain there.

Cambodia's democracy is under attack, with the country's Supreme Court dissolving Mr Rainsy's Cambodia National Rescue Party last year and jailing opposition leader Kem Sokha.

The opposition was poised to strongly challenge the 33-year rule of Prime Minister Hun Sen at the July election.

<http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/aust-grants-refugee-status-to-cambodians/news-story/b77c419f8eeaaedeedc22ab1ad97a0b9>

18. Australian citizens wrongfully detained because of immigration failures, report finds

Poorly trained officers took no responsibility for flawed decisions that landed two Australians in immigration detention, despite being citizens

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Fri 2 Feb 2018 04:00 AEDT

Immigration department staff who illegally detained two Australian citizens in 2016 and 2017 were poorly trained, ignored critical information, and took no responsibility for flawed decisions, an internal government report has found.

The report, by a former inspector general of intelligence and security and released under freedom of information laws, says there were systemic failures within the department and it is "quite possible other citizens have been detained or removed [from the country] in similar circumstances".

“DIBP officers do not consistently demonstrate the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills to fairly and lawfully exercise the power to detain,” Vivienne Thom’s report found.

“In these cases, some decisions were based on erroneous assumptions, did not consider all relevant information or seek to resolve complexities. Officers did not assume personal responsibility for decisions,” she said.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/02/australian-citizens-wrongfully-detained-because-of-immigration-failures-report-finds>

19. Man who came to Australia 61 years ago loses visa bid

John Falzon has been in immigration detention since his release following cannabis trafficking conviction

The Guardian
Australian Associated Press
Wed 7 Feb 2018 14.15 AEDT

A man who came to Australia as a toddler 61 years ago has lost a high court bid to have his visa reinstated after being convicted of cannabis trafficking, leaving him at risk of deportation.

The high court has dismissed John Falzon’s fight to regain his visa, meaning the Victorian grandfather could be deported to Malta, a country he left when his parents migrated to Australia in 1956.

Falzon, who never gained Australian citizenship, had his visa cancelled on character grounds after serving eight years’ jail for trafficking a commercial quantity of cannabis. He also had convictions for previous drug and other crimes.

Falzon has been in immigration detention since his release from jail, fighting through the courts to get his visa back.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/07/grandfather-who-came-to-australia-as-a-toddler-loses-visa-bid>

20. Paul Burgess' visa returned after court rules Minister only did 'superficial' review of bikie material

ABC News
Updated February 13, 2018 08:33:05

An Adelaide man who has been in immigration detention since June 2016 and facing deportation to the UK over links with the Comancheros bikie gang has won his latest legal fight against the Immigration Minister.

The Federal Government first stripped Paul Burgess of permanent residency based on two months of gang membership.

The Federal Court was told that when that decision was quashed in earlier proceedings, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton ruled — after 20 minutes of consideration — to cancel the visa again on grounds including a conviction for driving dangerously.

Mr Burgess’ lawyer Mitchell Simmons said that decision had now been quashed by the court and his client was set to fly home to his fiancée and six-year-old son in Adelaide.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-13/paul-burgess-immigration-detention-court-win/9425382>

21. Rohingya refugee pleads for Australia's permission to speak to EU

Habiburahman asked to address European parliament about persecution, but cannot leave Australia

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Fri 9 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

A Rohingya refugee living in Australia is pleading with the Australian government to grant him a travel document allowing him to speak at the European parliament about the persecution of his people.

Habiburahman — who goes by only one name — arrived in Australia from Myanmar, which was then known as Burma, by boat in 2009.

But he has spent 18 years as a stateless refugee and cannot currently leave Australia. He is pleading for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Rohingya people he says are silenced by the Myanmar military government.

His book, *D'Abord, ils ont effacé notre nom – First they erased our name* – cowritten with French author Sophie Ansel, charts his own life and the persecution of his people. It is set to be launched in Europe this month.

Belgian MEP Marie Arena, has invited him to address the European parliament about the ongoing persecution of the Rohingya people, and he is also scheduled to meet with representatives from Amnesty International. Letters of support have been sent to the French president, Emmanuel Macron. “This is my chance to speak for my people, who continue to suffer, but who are voiceless,” Habiburahman told the Guardian.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/09/rohingyan-refugee-pleads-for-australias-permission-to-speak-to-eu>

22. VIDEO: Why has a Rohingya been stopped from addressing European parliaments?

Why has a prominent Rohingya who found refuge in Melbourne been stopped from addressing European parliaments?

ABC-TV - 7.30

Posted Thu 22 Feb 2018, 8:27pm

The situation facing Rohingya people in northern Myanmar is a clear case of ethnic cleansing, according to the United Nations. Half a million people have fled, with one of the most prominent finding refuge in Melbourne. He has been invited to address Parliaments in Europe, but the Australian government has denied him a vi

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/why-has-a-prominent-rohingya-who-found-refuge-in/9476094>

23. Sayed Abdellatif: hope for asylum seeker after removal from Interpol list

Egyptian detained in Australia for six years on the basis of a show trial says government should ‘bring an end to injustice’ by releasing him

The Guardian

Ben Doherty and Sarah Malik

Sat 24 Feb 2018 06.00 AEDT

Sayed Abdellatif, the Egyptian refugee detained in Australia on the basis of false charges from a show trial nearly two decades ago, has been removed from Interpol’s wanted list, paving the way for his possible release.

Abdellatif, once described as a “pool fence terrorist” by Tony Abbott, has been exiled from his homeland for 26 years after being convicted in absentia of offences he never committed during a discredited mass trial in Cairo in 1999.

The evidence used to convict Abdellatif was obtained using torture, including of his own father, a fact known by the Australian government since 2015, but not acted upon.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/24/sayed-abdellatif-hope-for-asylum-seeker-after-removal-from-interpol-list>

24. MEDIA RELEASE: Release Sayed: False red notice lifted from Egyptian asylum seeker

Sat February 24, 2018

Refugee Action Coalition

Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

The fabricated Interpol Red Notice issued by the Egyptian government against asylum seeker Sayed Abdellatif has been unconditionally lifted (see document here). The red notice has been the excuse used by successive Australian governments to hold Sayed and his family in detention for almost six years.

Since 2013, when they were transferred to Villawood detention centre, Sayed has been separated from his family in a different area of the detention facility. The withdrawal of the red notice is a victory for Sayed who has always insisted that the red notice was bogus. It is also a slap in the face for the succession of Immigration Ministers who have used Sayed as a political punching bag.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=6646>

25. Scott Morrison asked Asio to delay asylum seekers' visa checks, papers show

As immigration minister he sought legal ways to stop boat arrivals from ever gaining permanent protection

The Guardian
Gareth Hutchens and Ben Doherty
Tue 30 Jan 2018 11.29 AEDT

Scott Morrison, when he became immigration minister after the 2013 election, asked Asio to delay its security checks of asylum seekers to prevent them being granted permanent protection visas.

Leaked cabinet documents, first reported by the ABC, show that in the first month of the Abbott government – after it had campaigned hard in opposition to “stop the boats” – Morrison asked his department to advise what legal avenues were available to prevent asylum seekers who had arrived by boat from ever being awarded permanent protection.

Morrison was told there were 70 asylum seekers who had no health, character or security checks outstanding, with only pre-grant checks to be completed, and “this group is the highest risk of requiring a permanent grant”.

A further 620 people had had most of their checks completed and were also likely to be awarded a permanent grant, pushing the total number of high priority asylum seekers to 700.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/jan/30/scott-morrison-asked-asio-to-delay-asylum-seekers-visa-checks-papers-show>

26. Scott Morrison tried to delay asylum seekers' permanent protection visas, documents reveal

ABC News
Exclusive by political reporter Ashlynn McGhee and Michael McKinnon
Updated January 30, 2018 13:35:19

Scott Morrison agreed his department should intervene in ASIO security checks to try to prevent asylum seekers from being granted permanent protection visas, according to cabinet documents obtained by the ABC.

In late 2013, the then-immigration minister was rushing through changes that would prevent any asylum seekers who arrived by boat from ever being granted permanent protection in Australia.

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection advised Mr Morrison that up to 700 asylum seekers "must" be granted permanent protection under the existing legislation.

The minister was clearly concerned, requesting the exact number and advice on whether he could confer an alternative visa.

The department wrote back with a range of "mitigation strategies" and the minister signed up.

Mr Morrison agreed his secretary should write to the director-general of security to request ASIO delay security checks so that people close to being granted permanent protection would miss the deadline.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-30/scott-morrison-tried-to-delay-asylum-seekers-visas/9353350>

27. Malcolm Turnbull says Scott Morrison 'stopped the boats' as immigration minister, makes no apologies

ABC News
By political reporter Matthew Doran
Updated January 30, 2018 17:25:44

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has defended frontbencher Scott Morrison's conduct as immigration minister, arguing he did an "outstanding job" in stopping the people smuggling trade.

The ABC has revealed cabinet documents from 2014 that show Mr Morrison agreed that the nation's domestic spy agency should delay security checks to try to prevent asylum seekers from being granted permanent protection visas.

Mr Turnbull has defended his now-Treasurer's handling of the situation.

"When he was the minister for immigration and border protection he stopped the boats," the Prime Minister said.

"He did an outstanding job in securing our borders.

"We make no apologies for sending the clearest message to the people smugglers and to their would-be customers; if you want to come or think you can come to Australia on a people smugglers' boat, you're wrong."

But Mr Turnbull did not specifically answer questions on whether ASIO complied with the request.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-30/turnbull-defends-morrison-record-as-immigration-minister/9375024>

28. Karen Middleton: All 57 ASIO refugee case warnings revised after review

As evidence emerges of Scott Morrison's interference with ASIO's refugee assessments, figures show every warning given by the agency since 2012 was ultimately revised down. By Karen Middleton.

The Saturday Paper
Edition No. 190 February 3 – 9, 2018
Karen Middleton

This week, a Sri Lankan man who had been held in immigration detention in Australia for five years was suddenly released.

Lukesh – not his real name – was one of 57 people since 2012 who were found to be eligible for refugee status but were detained because of an adverse security assessment from the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

All have since had their cases reviewed and the ASIO assessments revised.

When the Attorney-General's Department's independent reviewer of adverse assessments examined ASIO's finding in Lukesh's case, the agency amended its assessment from adverse to "qualified", meaning it was no longer a barrier to his being granted protection.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/immigration/2018/02/03/exclusive-all-57-asio-refugee-case-warnings-revised-after-review>

29. PNG police forced removal of refugees from Port Moresby to Manus reveals resettlement farce

Wednesday February 21, 2018
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

In the early hours of Tuesday, 20 February, police arrested up to 13 refugees who had been living Aku Lodge.

They were being forcibly returned to Manus Island, but for unconfirmed reasons there was a problem with the plane. The refugees are now being held at another lodge in Port Moresby surrounded by up to 50 PNG police. Their mobile phones have been confiscated.

It is expected that the refugees will be moved to Manus Island once alternative transport can be arranged.

The refugees had been living at Aku for up to two years, after being moved from Manus Island, supposedly to be resettled in Port Moresby or further afield in PNG.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=6637>

30. Manus Island asylum seekers told to stay in detention centre amid attacks

ABC News
By Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek
Updated February 17, 2018 00:25:27

Asylum seekers on Manus Island have been told to stay in their accommodation after three men were allegedly attacked and injured by soldiers from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force.

The asylum seekers from Iraq, Iran and Pakistan said they were set upon by a group of soldiers while walking in the main town on the island, Lorengau on February 16.

They suffered a number of injuries and were treated in the Lorengau hospital and the special clinic at the refugee transit centre.

Pakistani refugee Mumtaz Ali said a man ran up behind him while he was walking through Lorengau in the rain.

"I thought that he wanted to share my umbrella with me," he said.

"When I turned my face to him, he directly punched me on my face, on my right eye, right-side eye, then I fall on the ground and he started kicking me."

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-17/manus-asylum-seekers-allegedly-attacked-by-png-soldiers/9456790>

31. Third group of Manus refugees leave for US as despair grips those left behind

UN calls for urgent resolution for those left in limbo in Australia's offshore detention regime amid 'a pervasive and worsening sense of despair'

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Wed 14 Feb 2018 16.32 AEDT

Another 18 refugees from Australia's offshore immigration regime have left Papua New Guinea for resettlement in America, but the United Nations refugee agency has warned that those who remain are showing "a pervasive and worsening sense of despair".

Speaking in Geneva, the UNHCR's regional protection officer, Rico Salcedo, said Australia's offshore regime was holding refugees and asylum seekers in dangerous and harmful conditions, and alternative solutions must be found.

"We cannot emphasise enough that solutions must be found for all, outside of Papua New Guinea, as a matter of urgency," Salcedo said. "Australia remains ultimately responsible, as the state from which these refugees and asylum seekers have sought international protection, for their welfare and long-term settlement outside of Papua New Guinea."

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/14/third-group-of-manus-refugees-leave-for-us-as-despair-grips-those-left-behind>

32. Australia issues deportation order for Tamil asylum seeker despite torture fears

United Nations committee against torture requested Australia not move him while it investigates risk to his safety

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Tue 13 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

A Sri Lankan asylum seeker has been ordered for deportation next week, despite the United Nations committee against torture requesting Australia not move him while it investigates whether he will be tortured if he is returned against his will.

The deportation order issued for Tamil asylum seeker Shantaruban by the Australian Border Force says he will be deported on 22 February. He will not be permitted any visitors at the airport when he is removed and he will be escorted on his flight to Colombo.

He has refused to sign the order.

In October last year the UN committee against torture issued an interim measure request, formally asking that Australia "refrain from returning [Shantaruban] to the Republic of Sri Lanka while his complaint is under consideration".

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/13/australia-issues-deportation-order-for-tamil-asylum-seeker-despite-torture-fears>

33. Manus Island asylum seeker tied down, force fed in PNG hospital

Canberra Times
January 27 2018 - 8:58PM
Joe Hinchliffe

A 42-year-old Manus Island asylum seeker has been tied down and force fed in a Papua New Guinea hospital, according to staff at the hospital and other asylum seekers.

A nurse at the hospital said the asylum seeker could die in Port Moresby if he is not taken to Australia for treatment.

Amnesty International said on Friday night that the Iranian man was approaching the third week of a hunger strike, has been restrained for three days and was being force-fed by hospital staff.

Manus Island asylum seeker and journalist Behrouz Boochani posted a picture of the man on that night on social media in which he appears to be tied to a hospital bed, saying he had been on hunger strike for 20 days.

"He has high blood pressure and diabetes and the doctors have forced him to eat by getting authority from the court," Mr Boochani tweeted.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/manus-island-asylum-seeker-tied-down-force-fed-in-png-hospital-20180127-h0pa0q.html>

34. Asylum seekers left stranded in PNG give up on dreams of a new life in Australia

ABC Radio CAF - Correspondents Report
By Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek
Updated January 27, 2018 07:14:01

Australians are familiar with the story of asylum seekers who crossed from Indonesia to Christmas Island and were sent to detention camps in Papua New Guinea and Nauru. But there are two men in Port Moresby who used small dinghies to cross the Torres Strait between Australia and Papua New Guinea three times to seek asylum. It's a difficult journey, taking hours and hours in the sun, or through storms, to get to Australia.

Once, they even made it to Melbourne, where they started new lives — working, sightseeing and hoping they would not be caught.

Zalman and Samar Khan are friends from the tribal region of Pakistan on the Afghan border. Samar said the pair, who are from the Pashtun tribal group, were forced to leave in 2013 to avoid being killed by Taliban militants. "They killed my classmate and my schoolmate. But I was lucky, I run away from there," he said.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-27/asylum-seekers-left-stranded-in-port-moresby/9364214>

35. Manus refugees stripped of phone cards

Radio New Zealand
12:06 pm on 14 February 2018

A Manus Island refugee in Papua New Guinea's capital for medical treatment says phone cards are no longer being given to about 100 refugees staying in a Port Moresby hotel.

Last month, the same group of men were stripped of their weekly allowance, forcing them to sell food rations to afford for other necessities such as toiletries.

The refugee said previously the men at Granville Hotel were each given two phone cards on a weekly basis, worth about \$US6 each.

He said the phone cards stopped being provided when the company Paladin Solutions took over the contract to provide security at the hotel from the start of February.

Since then, the refugee said men in Granville have struggled to stay in contact with their families.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/350384/manus-refugees-stripped-of-phone-cards>

36. Indonesians jailed for people-smuggling offences seek compensation

Australian lawyer representing the 55 people says they had been jailed as adults while still minors

The Guardian
Christopher Knaus
Sat 27 Jan 2018 16.21 AEDT

More than 50 Indonesian minors who crewed asylum-seeker boats want compensation from the Australian government for being jailed as adults.

The 55 Indonesians have joined a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission about their treatment while in prison,, and have flagged potential federal court action against the federal government.

Canberra lawyer Sam Tierney, of Ken Cush & Associates, said many of them were tried, convicted and sent to adult prisons for people-smuggling offences.

Attempts to verify their age were either insufficient or relied on flawed wrist x-ray testing, he said.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/jan/27/indonesians-jailed-for-people-smuggling-offences-seek-compensation>

37. Nauru refugees, asylum seekers and staff exposed to 'highly toxic' mould

Former staff suffering from conditions including toxic mould syndrome and hundreds still living in mould-prone tents

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Fri 23 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

Four years after the Australian government was repeatedly warned the mould growing throughout Nauru's regional processing centres was making people sick, refugee families, including young children, are still being forced to live under rotting canvas in Nauru.

At least 330 refugees and asylum seekers, including 36 children, still live in mould-prone tents on Nauru. Some tents and work buildings have previously been found to be "highly toxic", with the level of mould measured at up to 76 times the normal, safe level.

At least a dozen former staff who have worked in the regional processing centre are understood to have developed conditions from exposure to mould and breathing the contaminated air in the buildings. The conditions include toxic mould syndrome, cognitive and neurological symptoms, chronic pain and chest infections.

A class action against the commonwealth government, for failing in its duty of care to those housed in its immigration centres, and those contracted to work there, is being considered by Australian law firms.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/23/nauru-refugees-asylum-seekers-and-staff-exposed-to-highly-toxic-mould>

38. Nauru mould problem was of 'epic proportions', microbiologist says

Dr Cameron Jones, who was contracted by Transfield, says his 225-page report on the problem was covered up

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Sat 24 Feb 2018 08.00 AEDT

The microbiologist contracted to assess the mould in the Nauru immigration centre says the contamination was "of epic proportions" and presented a serious health hazard to those in the camp, but that his report on the problem was covered up.

Former staff have said they have been left with cognitive impairment and chronic lung infections after living and working in contaminated buildings, and one former teacher has said her career has been derailed by the ill-health she has suffered from her time on the island.

And while the department of home affairs has said there have been no cases of anyone developing health issues following exposure to mould at the Nauru RPC, the government's own workplace safety agency, Comcare, has confirmed to the Guardian it has "received a complaint in 2016 from a worker employed by a contractor who advised they had been diagnosed with a respiratory condition after living in a water damaged and mould affected building at the Nauru RPC".

The microbiologist Dr Cameron Jones was contracted by the camp management contractor Transfield – the company has since been rebranded as Broadspectrum – in 2014 to assess the uncontrolled mould outbreak within the Australian-run Nauru regional processing centre, and to recommend ways to combat it.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/23/nauru-mould-problem-was-of-epic-proportions-microbiologist-says>

39. Disgust at Australia's "wilful neglect" of refugees medical needs on Nauru

Radio New Zealand
February 23 2018 - 12:37pm

A doctor, who looked after refugees detained on Nauru, says Australia's wilful neglect of their medical needs is disgusting.

Nick Martin was contracted by the Australian government through the company International Health and Medical Services, or IHMS.

Dr Martin said he's speaking out about the government's negligence to preserve his moral and professional integrity.

"And so in the end after multiple, multiple occasions with multiple patients where my medical advice was being ignored or overridden by a bureaucrat with no medical training, in the end I'd had enough and thought this is just disgusting," he said.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/351065/disgust-at-australia-s-wilful-neglect-of-refugees-medical-needs-on-nauru>

40. Asylum seeker at risk of 'sudden death' denied permission to travel for treatment with son

ABC Radio - AM
By Lexi Metherell
Updated Monday February 19, 2018 at 4:17pm

An asylum seeker on Nauru with a life-threatening heart condition is refusing an offer to be transferred overseas for medical treatment, saying she will not go without her son.

The 55-year-old Iranian woman, Fatemeh, has been judged to be, "at extremely high and imminent risk of having a catastrophic cardiac event such as heart attack, or sudden death due to arrhythmias" by a doctor asked to review her medical history.

Fatemeh, who asked to remain anonymous, said Australian Border Force officials made the offer conditional on her son staying behind.

She said her son, who is 17, has mental health problems, has no-one to stay with and is very dependent on her.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-19/asylum-seeker-at-risk-of-sudden-death-refusing-transfer/9462012>

41. Iranian refugee told to leave son on Nauru to access medical treatment abroad

ABC Radio National Breakfast
Tuesday 20 February 2018 6:51AM

Doctors and refugee advocates are raising concerns about the deteriorating health of an Iranian refugee on Nauru who is suffering from a serious heart condition.

A medical report commissioned by the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre says the 55-year-old is at imminent risk of having "a catastrophic cardiac arrest or sudden death".

Fatemah and the refugee advocates working on her case say last year the Australian Border Force offered to transfer her to a healthcare facility overseas.

But Fatemah has so far refused to leave Nauru for treatment because she says her teenage son would have to stay behind.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/iranian-refugee-told-to-leave-son-on-nauru/9463762>

42. Nauru refugee caught between her son and 'high heart attack risk'

Medical report says she needs to be moved urgently for treatment but border force won't allow her son to go with her

The Guardian
Ben Doherty and Saba Vasefi
Mon 19 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

Doctors have diagnosed a refugee held on Nauru as being at “high and imminent risk of ... heart attack or sudden death”, but the Australian Border Force has refused to move her to a hospital that can treat her, because she won’t leave her young son alone on the island.

On five separate occasions since September 2016, and with increasing urgency, doctors have requested that Fatemeh, an Iranian refugee, be moved off Nauru for heart checks that cannot be performed on the island.

She has refused to leave her son – a minor – unaccompanied on the island, so the border force is not allowing her to leave the island for healthcare, even as her condition showed a precipitous deterioration.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/19/nauru-refugee-caught-between-her-son-and-high-heart-attack-risk>

43. More Nauru refugees depart for US as attack on Manus provokes panic

The Guardian
Staff and agencies
Sun 18 Feb 2018 14.33 AEDT

Another 35 refugees are leaving Nauru for the United States on Sunday, the third group to depart Australia’s offshore immigration centres this week.

Almost all are single Afghan, Pakistani or Rohingya men, along with one Sri Lankan family and one Bangladeshi refugee, said Ian Rintoul of the the Refugee Action Coalition.

The makeup further confirms fears that Iranians, who make up the largest national group on Nauru, have so far been excluded from the US intake. Iran was proscribed by Donald Trump’s “travel ban”.

So far 84 people have flown from Nauru and another 85 from Papua New Guinea’s Manus Island to the US under the resettlement deal, with at least one more flight expected to leave this month.

About 2,000 refugees and asylum seekers remain in Australia’s offshore system.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/18/more-nauru-refugees-depart-for-us-as-attack-on-manus-provokes-panic>

44. MEDIA RELEASE: Twenty-two refugees leave Nauru for the United States

Sunday February 11, 2018
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

The second group of refugees to leave Nauru for resettlement in the United States are leaving Nauru this afternoon, Nauru time. The 22 refugees are flying from Nauru to the United States, via Fiji, to Los Angeles.

Except for one couple, a Rohingya man and his wife, the other refugees leaving today (Sunday, 11 February) are single men: Afghans, Pakistanis, and Rohingya.

It is expected that altogether around 130 refugees will fly from Nauru to the United States this month.

As usual, the departure of the refugees highlights the flaws in the US resettlement process. Last week, Iranian refugees – the largest national group of refugees on Nauru – protested for the second week in a row, over Iranians being excluded from the US intake.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=6618>

45. Fourth group of refugees set to leave Nauru for the US

The 22 refugees are all single men except for one Rohingya man and his wife, refugee advocate says

The Guardian
Michael Slezak
Sun 11 Feb 2018 16.35 AEDT

The fourth group of refugees to be accepted for resettlement in the United States from Australia’s offshore immigration regime are poised to leave Nauru for the US, via Fiji.

The 22 refugees are all single men except for one Rohingya man and his wife, according to Ian Rintoul from the Refugee Action Coalition.

It is the second group to leave Nauru under the controversial resettlement program, following two groups that have also been resettled from Australia's detention centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea.

The latest cohort will bring the number of refugees resettled in the US to about 110. About 2,000 refugees and asylum seekers remain in Australia's offshore system.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/11/fourth-group-of-refugees-set-to-leave-nauru-for-the-us>

46. Mould bungle at Nauru detention centre

Seven News

Lisa Martin

AAP / February 7th, 2018

Staff at the Nauru immigration detention centre developed health problems from mould exposure in Australian taxpayer-funded buildings which were "rotting from the inside out."

A 15-month investigation by AAP can reveal air-conditioning caused water damage and mould to grow in the fire-resistant plasterboard walls and ceilings and the magnesium oxide board floors of modular staff buildings since 2013.

It's understood at least a dozen former centre workers exposed to mould in their bedrooms have developed conditions including toxic mould syndrome, cognitive and neurological symptoms, chronic pain, chest infections, and persistent coughs.

A source familiar with the problem said the buildings had been "rotting from the inside out" and people's feet had broken through the floors at Regional Processing Centre 1 which housed staff accommodation, the kitchen and mess hall.

The source said authorities at the centre blamed the health issues on passing phosphate trucks.

"Once the rectification started and they pulled the sheets off the walls to replace it, it was discovered that the fire-rated board was completely compromised due to rot and severe mould," the source said.

"In the event of a fire there's a very real risk of casualties."

The Nauru detention centre had burnt down following a 2013 riot and rebuilding has cost taxpayers \$356 million.

The same modular buildings were used in the Nauru hospital upgrade and community centre where there were also mould problems.

The source said building contractors had opted for a band-aid solution to fix the problem.

"They polished a turd," the source said.

But construction company Canstruct defended the fire resistance of buildings it installed on Nauru saying they complied with relevant Australian building codes and standards.

"No corners were cut at any stage," a company spokesman said.

The source said one of the building contractors was "somewhat commercially exposed" so a decision was made to repair small areas that were most visual "at a cost-plus variation to the contract".

AAP obtained a leaked email from a project manager with construction firm Canstruct which said minimum solutions were being sought and staff with knowledge of the extent of the problems had been "gagged".

The source said mould expert Jeremy Stamkos was hired to travel to Nauru to inspect the problem and devise a plan to fix it but his second trip was cancelled by "panicked" high-level stakeholders.

Canstruct disputes any claim Mr Stamkos was blocked from returning to the island and says he was involved in rectification works.

When asked about the mould problem on Nauru, Mr Stamkos told AAP he was "not authorised to talk" about the matter.

Minutes of meetings from December 2015 between the Immigration Department (now called Home Affairs), construction firm Jacobs and Canstruct, which AAP obtained under freedom of information laws, blamed the deterioration of floors in the mess, kitchen galley and cold store area on "heavy traffic".

The Home Affairs Department insisted the construction procurement process at Nauru was done in accordance with legislation and procurement rules.

The Australian Greens have called for an urgent investigation by Comcare, the public service workers compensation authority.

"The government has abjectly failed in its duty of care," Greens senator Nick McKim told AAP.

The Nauru government said it was unaware of any problems with construction projects on the island.

Comment has been sought from Jacobs.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/38854131/mould-bungle-at-nauru-detention-centre/>

47. Illustrating the Nauru files: 'We have to fight with something'

Artistic depictions of detention, based on Guardian Australia's publication of leaked files, make you feel a deep kind of horrible about what happened on Nauru

The Guardian
Naaman Zhou
Sat 3 Feb 2018 08.40 AEDT

The incident report that Melbourne artist Angela Brennan read had all the names redacted.

It said that at 1.35pm one day on Nauru in March 2015 someone told a staff member two children had become upset in maths class. Another family had been medically evacuated to Australia and the children felt left behind. They, or someone else, had seen another detainee self-harm. A man saw them crying.

"He then said: 'Do I have to kill myself to go to Australia?' What place makes a [REDACTED] year-old try to kill themselves."

Brennan wrote that first quote out in loopy, light-green letters and hung it on canvas like a beach towel.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/03/illustrating-the-nauru-files-we-have-to-fight-with-something>

48. MEDIA RELEASE: Nauru independence celebration overshadowed by prison island's neglect and abuse

Today, 31 January, 2018
Refugee Action Coalition
Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

Today, 31 January, marks the high point of independence celebrations on Nauru (see photos).

Curiously the celebrations have been marked by the government lifting the ban on Facebook that was imposed in 2015, as part of the crackdown on democratic rights that also removed the right to protest, when hundreds of asylum seekers began to protest against their imprisonment in Nauru.

Nauru is now known internationally for the human rights abuses perpetrated on the island. Sexual assault, bashings, routine robberies of asylum seekers and refugees are ignored by the police force.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=6591>

49. Judge orders Nauru refugee girl's transfer to Australia over suicide risk

Costs to Australian government are outweighed by need to protect a vulnerable girl, court rules

The Guardian
Ben Doherty
Sat 10 Feb 2018 04.00 AEDT

A refugee girl held on Nauru was at "extreme risk" of making further suicide attempts if left on the island, a judge has said, ordering the Australian government to move her off the island and into specialist psychiatric care.

The girl, not yet a teenager, had made repeated attempts on her life, and continued to explicitly threaten suicide.

She arrived in Australia with her family by boat in 2013 and had been held on Nauru since that time.

In a federal court hearing, Justice Bernard Murphy heard the girl was “crying and screaming most of the time”, and that her mother had been forced to sleep by her side to stop her from harming herself.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/feb/10/judge-orders-nauru-refugee-girls-transfer-to-australia-over-suicide-risk>

50. Girl living on Nauru to be transferred to Aus mental health facility due to 'extreme suicide risk'

ABC News

By political reporter Matthew Doran

Updated February 09, 2018 15:12:41

The Commonwealth has been ordered to bring a young girl from the Nauru detention centre to Australia for urgent psychiatric treatment, with warnings she could take her own life without intervention.

The Federal Court has found the refugee, whose exact age has been withheld, arrived on Christmas Island with her family in 2013 while trying to travel to Australia by boat.

She has been on Nauru ever since, and has already tried to take her own life.

Today in Melbourne, Federal Court Judge Brendan Murphy granted an urgent injunction by her family's lawyers to bring her to Australia because there were no specialist child psychiatrists permanently based on Nauru.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-09/nauru-refugee-to-be-transferred-to-australia-over-suicide-risk/9416276>

51. MEDIA RELEASE: Fears for two-week old refugee baby on Nauru

Friday January 26, 2018

Refugee Action Coalition

Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

There are serious concerns for the welfare of a two-week baby boy on Nauru.

The baby was born to Iranian refugees on 12 January.

The baby has a seriously infected umbilicus that has been left untreated since Thursday after the baby's mother was turned away at the Nauru hospital being told that the baby was too young for antibiotics and to bathe the infection with salty water.

The infection had become so severe by Thursday night that the baby's feet were swollen and bleeding. Doctors took six attempts to get intravenous drip into the baby late Thursday night (Nauru time).

Yet no antibiotics were administered until Friday lunch-time. It seems that the antibiotics were only administered after advocates had contacted IHMS and Border Force in Australia.

It is understood that the baby's temperature has not been checked since 4.00am Nauru time.

FULL STORY AT <http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=6569>