

smuggling of migrants — global news November 2016

This monthly newsletter summarises news items and media commentary from some of the world's leading media outlets. The Migrant Smuggling Working Group takes no responsibility for the content and accuracy of the information provided in these news items.

AFRICA

GENERAL

Eritrean refugees in Israel sent to Uganda and Rwanda – 24 November 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/10/eritrean-refugees-israel-uganda-rwanda-161024130201856.html>

Media reports suggest that the three countries have cut a secret, high-level deal in which the African states accept refugees in return for arms, military training and other aid from Israel.

LIBYA

UN: Survivors report 240 dead in 2 Mediterranean shipwrecks – 3 November 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--italy-migrants-shipwreck-20161103-story.html>

Survivors say as many as 240 people have died in two shipwrecks off Libya, the U.N. refugee agency reported Thursday, bringing this year's toll to more than 4,220 migrants dead or missing in risky Mediterranean Sea crossings, the highest count on record.

AMERICAS

CANADA

Jury hears details of man's death on ship carrying Tamil migrants – 1 November 2016

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/jury-hears-details-of-mans-death-on-ship-carrying-tamil-migrants/article32609934/>

A Tamil man whose uncle died during their voyage to Canada on a migrant vessel six years ago has told a human-smuggling trial his relative was extremely ill in the days leading up to his death.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

7 Men Accused in Sex-Trafficking Ring in U.S. and Mexico – 1 November 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/02/nyregion/7-men-accused-in-sex-trafficking-ring-in-us-and-mexico.html>

Seven men have been indicted on sex trafficking charges in what federal officials said on Tuesday was an international organization that exploited adult and underage women for more than a decade in Mexico and the United States.

Border Patrol union welcomes Trump's proposed wall as a 'vital tool' – 18 November 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-san-diego-border-patrol-wall-20161118-story.html>

The National Border Patrol Council has high hopes for President-elect Donald Trump's border security policies.

Cuban baseball smugglers used threats and 'kidnapping' – 23 November 2016

<http://money.cnn.com/2016/11/22/news/mlb-cuban-smuggling/index.html>

A smuggling ring held Cuban baseball stars at gunpoint in Mexico, threatening to kill them if they tried to escape before signing lucrative contracts with Major League Baseball, according to U.S. prosecutors.

VENEZUELA

Hungry Venezuelans Flee in Boats to Escape Economic Collapse – 25 November 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/25/world/americas/hungry-venezuelans-flee-in-boats-to-escape-economic-collapse.html>

Desperate Venezuelans are streaming across the Amazon Basin by the tens of thousands to reach Brazil. They are concocting elaborate scams to sneak through airports in Caribbean nations that once accepted them freely. When Venezuela opened its border with Colombia for just two days in July, 120,000 people poured across, simply to buy food, officials said. An untold number stayed.

ASIA-PACIFIC

INDONESIA

Bali immigration office thwarts people-smuggling attempt – 1 November 2016

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/11/01/bali-immigration-office-thwarts-people-smuggling-attempt.html>

The Ngurah Rai Immigration Office in Bali has foiled a suspected attempt to smuggle six Bangladeshi nationals into Australia following the arrest of a Bangladeshi suspect, Mohammad Kawsirprodan, on Oct. 29.

EUROPE

GENERAL

German ministry wants migrants returned to Africa: report – 6 November 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-idUSKBN131042>

The German Interior Ministry wants to stop migrants ever reaching Europe's Mediterranean coast by picking them up at sea and returning them to Africa, the Welt am Sonntag newspaper reported on Sunday.

German officials look to keep migrants from crossing the Mediterranean Sea to apply for asylum in Europe – 7 November 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-germany-migrants-20161107-story.html>

Germany's Interior Ministry appears willing to change the country's open-door policy toward migrants in favor of seeing refugee boats intercepted at sea and returned to northern Africa.

1,400 migrants rescued at sea – 12 November 2016

<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/11/12/europe/mediterranean-migrant-rescue/index.html>

About 1,400 migrants were rescued Saturday in the Mediterranean, including more than 700 who were taken off a large wooden boat spotted before dawn, organizations involved in the rescues said.

Migrant death toll from sea crossings hits record: 340 dead in less than 3 days – 17 November 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/ct-migrant-death-toll-mediterranean-20161117-story.html>

Four Mediterranean Sea shipwrecks in the past 2 ½ days have caused about 340 migrants to die or go missing, making 2016 the deadliest year on record for asylum seekers risking the dangerous voyage to Europe, a migration organization said Thursday.

More than 240 refugees die in Mediterranean this week – 17 November 2016

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/11/240-refugees-die-mediterranean-week-161116204013464.html>

More than 240 people have died in boats in the Mediterranean Sea this week, according to officials, as horrifying new testimony emerged from survivors of yet another tragedy off the coast of Libya.

Hundreds of migrants feared dead in latest sinkings on Mediterranean – 18 November 2016

<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/11/18/world/mediterranean-refugees-migrant-deaths/index.html>

More than 4,600 migrants are presumed to have died after attempting to cross the Mediterranean into Europe this year, the UN said Friday, following the latest deadly capsizings on the route.

November a deadly month for migrants crossing Mediterranean: IOM – 18 November 2016

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/november-a-deadly-month-for-migrants-crossing-mediterranean-iom-says/article32928173/>

At least 365 migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean this week in six sinkings, bringing the death toll so far this year to 4,636, already 1,000 more than in all of 2015, the International Organization for Migration said on Friday.

CYPRUS

Cyprus mounts rescue of more than 120 migrants aboard boat – 10 November 2016

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/11/10/cyprus-mounts-rescue-of-more-than-120-migrants-aboard-boat.html>

Cyprus authorities say they are towing a boat crammed with as many as 150 people believed to be Syrian migrants to a harbor.

FRANCE

Paris authorities clear thousands of migrants from makeshift camp known as 'Stalingrad' – 4 November 2016

<http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-paris-refugee-camp-20161104-story.html>

Hundreds of French riot police wielding bulletproof shields surrounded the tents and cardboard shelters of Paris' largest migrant camp Friday, clearing thousands of refugees and other migrants who had sought shelter in the French capital.

ITALY

People-smuggling: new photos boost claim that wrong man is on trial in Italy – 16 November 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/16/people-smuggling-new-photos-boost-claim-that-wrong-man-is-on-trial-in-italy>

New photographs appear to show one of north Africa's most wanted people-smugglers celebrating at a family wedding, giving fresh momentum to claims that a man accused of being the smuggler, and set to face trial in Italy this week, is the victim of mistaken identity.

Rescue ship carrying migrants reaches Italy after deadly week in Mediterranean – 20 November 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKBN13F0IC>

A rescue ship carrying more than 200 migrants and eight bodies, docked in Sicily on Sunday after a deadly week in the Mediterranean in which hundreds drowned trying to reach Europe from Libya.

Accused people smuggler appears in Italy court amid doubts over identity – 22 November 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-smuggler-idUSKBN13H1RG>

An alleged people smuggling kingpin arrested earlier this year appeared in an Italian court for the first time on Tuesday as his lawyer raised doubts about whether his identity was mistaken.

'They got the wrong man,' says people-smuggling suspect – 22 November 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/nov/22/people-smuggling-suspect-sends-facebook-message-that-man-on-trial-is-not-him>

A man believed to be one of the world's most wanted people smugglers, whom British police claimed to have helped to arrest and extradite to Italy, seems to have said this week that he remains at large and that an innocent man was seized and extradited in his place.

Record number of boat migrants reach Italy this year – 28 November 2016

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKBN13N250>

A record number of migrants have reached Italy by boat from North Africa in 2016, according to official data, as pressure on Italy's shelter and asylum systems grows.

2016 sets new record for asylum seekers reaching Italy by boat – 28 November 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/28/2016-sets-new-record-for-asylum-seekers-reaching-italy-by-boat>

More asylum seekers have now reached Italy by boat in 2016 than in any previous year on record.

SWEDEN

Swedish journalist faces trial for helping a Syrian boy enter Sweden – 18 November 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/17/swedish-journalist-faces-trial-for-helping-a-syrian-boy-enter-sweden>

A Swedish TV journalist is to face trial for people smuggling after helping a Syrian boy migrate from Greece to Sweden, an offence punishable by imprisonment.

UNITED KINGDOM

Romanian who smuggled Afghans into Plymouth on ferry is jailed – 2 November 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-devon-37841514>

A Romanian man caught smuggling nine people including children into the UK has been jailed for four years.

Alleged people smuggler to be extradited to Greece – 22 November 2016

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-38065328>

A man accused of being part of an illegal people smuggling ring will be extradited to Greece from the UK, a judge has ruled.