



smuggling of migrants – global news

january 2015

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AFRICA

MAURITANIA

Video: 'People died at sea, that's how life is' – 11 January 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2015/01/died-at-sea-how-life-201519202027135878.html>

Web exclusive: West African people smuggler says that Mauritanian authorities are closing in on his operations.

AMERICAS

UNITED STATES

Migrant Flow Into US From Caribbean Spikes – 4 January 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/01/04/us/ap-us-caribbean-migrants.html>

A recent spike in Cubans attempting to reach the United States by sea has generated headlines. But the numbers of Haitians and other Caribbean islanders making similar journeys are up even more.

Arizona signals plan to appeal decision on human smuggling law – 7 January 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/08/us-usa-immigration-arizona-idUSKBN0KH00320150108>

The Arizona Attorney-General's office plans to appeal a federal judge's ruling that struck down a 2005 law against human smuggling, his spokeswoman said on Wednesday.

Turbulent voyage: the Cuban baseball pipeline – 9 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/sports/sns-tns-bc-bbo-cuba-to-us-baseball-part1-20150109-story.html>

The clandestine journey from decaying ballparks to major league stadiums can be treacherous, degrading and expensive for Cuban baseball players who risk their lives on sea crossings only to be auctioned off by smugglers demanding an exorbitant cut of their contracts.

Havana: US immigration policy for Cubans needs to change – 21 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-tns-bc-uscuba-20150121-story.html>

Havana acknowledged Wednesday that only Congress could change U.S. immigration laws for Cubans, but contended that there could be leeway in how the laws are implemented. Cuban officials have long said they have serious concerns about the Cuban Adjustment Act and the U.S. wet-foot/dry-foot policy, and they repeated those concerns at U.S.-Cuba immigration talks in Havana. "They constitute the main incentive and the principal stimulus for illegal immigration and also for illegal entries"

into the United States, Josefina Vidal Ferreiro, who led the Cuban delegation to the talks, told reporters.

Four sentenced in California cross-border extortion ring – 26 January 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/27/us-usa-california-extortion-idUSKBN0L008F20150127>

Four people who admitted to extorting money from Latino families who believed they were ransoming kidnapped family members were sentenced to prison in San Diego federal court Monday. The 124 families in the U.S. sent nearly \$200,000 to the extortion ring to free loved ones they believed were being held by smugglers after being brought into the U.S. illegally.

California Man Pleads Guilty to Smuggling Dying Immigrants in Trunk – 27 January 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/01/27/world/americas/27reuters-usa-california-smuggling.html>

A U.S. citizen who was arrested entering the country from Mexico with two dying men in the trunk of his car pleaded guilty on Tuesday to felony smuggling charges in a federal California court.

Hawthorne man pleads guilty in death of two undocumented immigrants – 27 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-hawthorne-immigrants-20150127-story.html>

A Hawthorne man pleaded guilty Tuesday to felony charges stemming from the August death of two undocumented immigrants that he was attempting to smuggle into the U.S.

ASIA-PACIFIC

BANGLADESH

About 40 migrants missing off Bangladesh after their boat sinks – 29 January 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/29/bangladesh-boat-idUSL4N0V847820150129>

About 40 illegal migrants heading from Bangladesh to Malaysia to look for work were missing on Thursday after their boat sank, police said.

HONG KONG

Illegal workers being smuggled into Hong Kong hidden under trucks – 21 January 2015

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1683731/vietnamese-workers-smuggled-hong-kong-under-trucks>

A raid sounded echoes of a turbulent chapter in Hong Kong's history as 23 people were arrested yesterday - some of whom are believed to be core members of a syndicate that was smuggling illegal Vietnamese workers across the border hidden beneath trucks.

THAILAND

Thai vigilantes take up fight against human trafficking – 30 January 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/30/us-thailand-trafficking-idUSKBN0L304320150130>

Bullet-proof vest, shotgun, sunglasses: Kompat Sompaoat could be mistaken for a member of a SWAT team. He actually belongs to a motley group of Thai civilians who, frustrated by their government's lacklustre response to human trafficking, have taken up arms to patrol one of Asia's busiest smuggling routes.

Volunteers take on human trafficking gangs in Thai south – 30 January 2015

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/article/1696763/volunteers-take-traffickers>

Groups of southern Thais, who complain of government inaction, are banding together to combat the illegal trade in human cargo.

MIDDLE EAST

YEMEN

African migrants face death at sea in Yemen – 2 January 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/12/african-migrants-face-death-at-sea-yemen-20141230114436126121.html>

According to UN data, the number of Africans who perished off the Yemeni coast this year exceeds previous three years.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Internet at Heart of New Tactics for Med People Smugglers – 12 January 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/01/12/world/europe/ap-eu-europe-migrant-trafficking.html>

Migrants dreaming of Europe have their pick of social media sites that work like an online travel agent, advertising fares and offering tips on secure payments. Meanwhile, the traffickers who send them floating across the Mediterranean are buying scrapyards cargo ships over the Internet.

FRANCE

French police break up migrant fight – 3 January 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2015/01/french-police-break-up-migrant-fight-201513125332666791.html>

French riot police were called in to end fighting among about 200 migrants in Calais that left seven people injured. The clashes took place on Saturday in the sand dunes near the port where hundreds of migrants hoping to get to Britain wait out their chance in makeshift camps and shelters, AFP news agency reported.

ITALY

Traffickers Set Freighter on a Course for Italy and Flee, Leaving Migrants Aboard – 2 January 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/03/world/europe/italy-migrants-rescue.html>

For the second time in three days, the Italian authorities found themselves racing on Friday to rescue hundreds of migrants from an aging freighter that traffickers had pointed toward Italy and then abandoned, leaving the ship to plow through wintry seas at top speed with no one at the helm, heading straight for the coastline.

Authorities scramble to rescue 450 migrants abandoned in Mediterranean – 2 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-italy-migrants-abandoned-at-sea-20150102-story.html>

For the second time this week, an aging cargo ship packed with migrants was abandoned off the coast of Italy, said authorities who scrambled Friday to rescue about 450 people stranded in rough seas.

Italian authorities rescue cargo ship of abandoned migrants – 2 January 2015

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/migrants-rescued-as-smugglers-abandon-ship-in-rough-seas-without-crew/article22273440/>

For the second time in three days, Italian authorities found themselves racing on Friday to rescue hundreds of migrants from an aging freighter that traffickers had pointed toward Italy and then abandoned, leaving the ship to plow through wintry seas at top speed with no one at the helm, on a collision course with the coastline.

Immigrant smugglers now putting ships on autopilot in what is seen as dangerous new tactic – 3 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/sns-bc-eu--italy-migrants-stranded-at-sea-20150102-story.html>

Smugglers who bring migrants to Europe by sea appear to have adopted a new, more dangerous tactic: cramming hundreds of them onto a large cargo ship, setting it on an automated course to crash into the coast, and then abandoning the helm.

Q&A: Why migrant smugglers are switching to 'ghost ships' – 3 January 2015

<http://www.straitstimes.com/news/world/europe/story/ga-why-migrant-smugglers-are-switching-ghost-ships-20150103>

People traffickers have dramatically raised the stakes by using freighters to carry hundreds of migrants to Europe at a time, then jumping ship as the vessels steam towards shore.

Syrian migrants tell Italian police smugglers hid faces before abandoning helm of cargo ship – 4 January 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/sns-bc-eu--italy-migrants-stranded-at-sea-20150103-story.html>

Syrian migrants told Italian investigators Saturday that their smugglers wore hoods to avoid identification before putting their cargo ship on automatic pilot and abandoning it in choppy Mediterranean waters.

Stranded migrant vessel arrives in Italian port – 4 January 2015

<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/01/02/world/europe/italy-migrants-ship/index.html>

A crewless, powerless ship that drifted in the Mediterranean with hundreds of migrants aboard has been towed to an Italian port.

Italy 'ghost ship' migrants paid up to \$10,000 each to traffickers – 4 January 2015

<http://www.straitstimes.com/news/world/europe/story/360-migrants-leave-italy-migrant-ghost-ship-20150104>

Italian authorities disembarked 360 cold and hungry migrants Saturday from a ship left adrift by its crew off the country's coast, with some having paid up to US\$8,000 (\$10,600) to traffickers for the perilous journey.

EU Wants Explanation From Turkey on Migrant Smugglers – 6 January 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/01/06/world/europe/ap-eu-europe-turkey-migrants.html>

The European Union wants Turkey to explain how human traffickers could have taken two cargo ships filled with migrants out of the country and sent them toward Italy without Turkish authorities noticing.

Trading in souls: inside the world of the people smugglers – 7 January 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/07/-sp-trading-souls-inside-world-people-smugglers>

Abu Hamada, a 62-year-old civil engineer from the outskirts of Damascus, has not built much for several years, and yet by his own calculations he has earned about £1,500,000 in the past six months. That is because since moving to Egypt after the Syrian civil war started, this Syrian-Palestinian refugee has found a far more lucrative line of work – smuggling.

Migrant ghost ships: Who are the people smugglers? – 9 January 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30715001>

Human traffickers are believed to have set the Ezadeen cargo ship on autopilot before abandoning it to continue at full speed across the Mediterranean with 359 illegal migrants on board.

Human Smugglers Turn to Cargo Ships to Ferry Fleeing Syrians – 28 January 2015

<http://time.com/3685477/human-smugglers-turn-to-cargo-ships-to-ferry-fleeing-syrians/>

Syrians are paying \$4,000 to \$8,000 just to get to Italy by cargo ships.

Video: Smugglers profit off Syrian refugees fleeing cargo ships in pursuit of better lives – 28 January 2015

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/news-video/video-smugglers-profit-off-syrian-refugees-fleeing-cargo-ships-in-pursuit-of-better-lives/article22671432/>

In new human trafficking tactics, smugglers in the Mediterranean turn to cargo ships for Syrian refugees seeking better lives in Europe. With millions at stake, they're also using the refugees as crews.
