



smuggling of migrants – global news

july 2015

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

GENERAL

New Platform Set to Improve Information Sharing on Migrant Smuggling by Sea – 7 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/new-platform-set-improve-information-sharing-migrant-smuggling-sea>

A new inter-agency platform for information sharing on migrant smuggling by sea has been launched on 6 July by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in order to better understand unsafe mixed migration by sea.

AFRICA

GENERAL

Southern Africa Addresses Protection of Unaccompanied Child Migrants – 21 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/southern-africa-addresses-protection-unaccompanied-child-migrants>

IOM, in collaboration with the Government of Zimbabwe, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat, UNHCR and UNODC, met in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe earlier this month for a ministerial Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) meeting on mixed and irregular migration, with a special focus on the protection of unaccompanied migrant children.

ETHIOPIA

Africans seeking better lives pass through Ethiopian town – 5 July 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-af-ethiopia-life-in-a-migrant-town-20150705-story.html>

Metema, with about 100,000 people, is one of a handful of towns across the region that serve as feeders for a booming trade in migrants from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan, many hoping to make their way to Europe. Life here is now a cat-and-mouse game: The authorities are cracking down, yet the migrants just keep coming, often risking death.

ERITREA

Eritrea blames migrant exodus on human trafficking – 31 July 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/07/eritrea-blames-migrant-exodus-human-trafficking-150731053318736.html>

Eritrea has urged the UN Security Council to help bring human traffickers to justice, saying smuggling groups, not human rights abuses, were causing an exodus of migrants to Europe.

LIBYA

Detained Youth: Study Probes Fate of Young Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Libya – 7 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/detained-youth-study-probes-fate-young-migrants-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-libya>

A new study by Asmita Naik for the Mixed Migration Hub (MHub) reveals a consistent pattern of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers held in Libya in arbitrary detention in squalid, cramped conditions for months at a time without any form of due process.

IOM, UNHCR Train Libyan Partners on Saving Lives at Sea – 31 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/iom-unhcr-train-libyan-partners-saving-lives-sea>

The IOM office in Tripoli, with UNHCR, has organized a two-day technical workshop for Libyan partners on saving lives of migrants off the Libyan coast.

AMERICAS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Paper: Most US-Mexico Border Smugglers Are Americans – 18 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/18/us/ap-us-mexican-border-smuggling.html>

The smuggling of migrants across the U.S.-Mexico border relies heavily on American labor, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review found in an eight-month investigation that paints a portrait of the network of smugglers known as "coyotes."

Human Smuggling Ring Dismantled in South Texas – 30 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/30/us/ap-us-human-smuggling-ring.html>

U.S. Homeland Security investigators dismantled a South Texas ring that illegally smuggled thousands of immigrants across the border from Mexico and on to other parts of the state -- often tucked in small, dangerous truck crawl spaces.

ASIA-PACIFIC

GENERAL

Southeast Asia plans fund to help migrants, but offers decried as inadequate – 2 July 2015

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/02/asia-migrants-money-idUSL3N0ZI32X20150702>

Southeast Asian nations proposed on Thursday setting up a fund to tackle illegal migration, in one of the first coordinated actions after thousands of "boat people" arrived on the region's shores, but rights groups dismissed the offers as mere tokens.

CHINA

Chinese Media Accuse Turkey of Abetting Illegal Migration – 10 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/10/world/asia/ap-as-china-turkey-ughurs.html>

A Chinese state-run newspaper alleged Friday that Turkish agents are helping an illegal migration of ethnic Muslim Uighurs out of China by giving them Turkish documentation once they arrive in Southeast Asia.

China Says to Fight Terror, People Smuggling With Turkey – 29 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/07/29/world/asia/29reuters-turkey-china.html>

The leaders of China and Turkey agreed on Wednesday to strengthen cooperation in fighting terror and people smuggling, a senior Chinese diplomat said, following friction between the two over Uighurs from China's Xinjiang who have fled to Turkey.

INDIA

Indian Coast Guard Seizes Iranian Boat, Arrests 12 Crew – 5 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/05/world/asia/ap-as-india-iran-boat-seized-.html>

India's coast guard seized an Iranian fishing boat off the country's southern coast early Sunday and arrested 12 crew members, officials said.

THAILAND

Thailand, Under Fire, Says Rejected China Request to Deport All Uighur Muslims – 10 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/07/10/world/asia/10reuters-thailand-ughurs-turkey.html>

Thailand sought on Friday to defuse international criticism of its decision to deport nearly 100 Uighur Muslims back to China, saying it had rejected a request from Beijing to return all the Uighur migrants held in its detention camps.

Thailand Charges 72 With Human Trafficking Crimes Ahead of U.S. Report – 24 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/25/world/asia/thailand-charges-72-with-human-trafficking-crimes-ahead-of-us-report.html>

Prosecutors in Thailand indicted 72 people on Friday, accusing them of involvement in a multinational human trafficking syndicate. The indictments were filed three days before the expected release of an annual State Department report on human trafficking in countries around the world, including Thailand.

Senior Thailand army officer among 72 indicted on people-trafficking charges – 24 July 2015

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/1843327/senior-thailand-army-officer-among-72-indicted-people>

Lieutenant General Manas Kongpan remains the only military officer charged with complicity in people smuggling, something that has raised eyebrows among human rights groups and observers who say it is unlikely such an influential officer would have acted alone.

MIDDLE EAST

SYRIA

More than 4 million refugees have fled Syria's civil war, UN says – 9 July 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-syria-refugees-20150709-story.html>

With no end in sight to Syria's civil war, the number of people who have fled to neighboring countries has surpassed 4 million, according to United Nations figures released Thursday.

TURKEY

Smugglers Dodge Turkish Army on Border With Islamic State-Held Syria – 13 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/07/13/world/middleeast/13reuters-mideast-crisis-turkey-border.html>

Turkey's armed forces may have sent additional soldiers and equipment to this region in recent weeks as fighting in northern Syria intensifies, but smuggling along a border which thousands of foreign fighters are thought to have crossed to join the militant ranks appears to be continuing.

Turkey's Coast Guard on frontline of refugee smuggling – 29 July 2015

<http://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2015/07/29/coast-guard-turkey-damon-1klv.cnn/video/playlists/intl-europe/>

CNN's Arwa Damon goes out with the Turkish Coast Guard as they patrol waters for smugglers and boats full of refugees fleeing the bloody Syrian war.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Migrant Boat Arrivals in Europe Top 150,000 in 2015 – 10 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/migrant-boat-arrivals-europe-top-150000-2015>

IOM estimates that some 150,000 migrants have reached Europe by sea to date in 2015. Almost all arrivals were registered in Italy (74,947) or Greece (75,970).

Gateway to freedom: Migrants walk thousands of km for haven of Western Europe – 10 July 2015

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/gateway-to-freedom/article25410710/>

Turn off the highway that winds among the farms near Serbia's border with Hungary, walk into the shoulder-high weeds and you find them: hundreds of people, nearly all of them young men, clustered in makeshift camps. They're hiding here – near the end of epic overland journeys – waiting for the right moment to continue their march north, toward what they hope are new and better lives in the European Union, or even Canada.

Europol admits Sicilian unit unable to target Libyan people smugglers – 21 July 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/21/new-sicilian-unit-cant-target-libyan-people-smugglers-admits-europol>

A Sicily-based intelligence operation that David Cameron claimed would disrupt the trafficking and smuggling gangs of the Mediterranean will in reality be unable to gather enough information to target Libyan people smugglers, the EU's law enforcement agency has admitted.

FRANCE

Migrants rush tunnel linking France and England for second night – 29 July 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/ct-eurotunnel-migrant-crossing-20150729-story.html>

Migrants rushed the tunnel linking France and England repeatedly for a second night on Wednesday and one man was crushed to death by a truck in the chaos, deepening tensions surrounding the thousands of people camped in this northern French port city.

France deploys riot police to bolster Calais security – 29 July 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--france-migrants-20150729-story.html>

Undeterred by an influx of French riot police, a surveillance helicopter, or a ninth death this summer among the tens of thousands who attempt to cross the Channel, the migrants came in groups of a dozen or more. Men and women, some hiding their faces beneath bandannas, walked single file to sneak over a bent fence along the train tracks leading to the tunnel and ultimately to England.

Crisis in Calais: A migrant exodus through the Channel Tunnel turns deadly – 29 July 2015

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/crisis-in-calais-a-migrant-exodus-through-the-channel-tunnel-turns-deadly/article25750253/>

A Sudanese man died on Wednesday as migrants desperate to enter Britain from France stormed the Channel Tunnel entrance, prompting governments in both countries to promise to beef up security there.

One dead as 1,500 migrants attempt to enter Eurotunnel – 29 July 2015

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/07/dead-1500-migrants-attempt-enter-eurotunnel-150729061835831.html>

At least one person has been found dead as about 1,500 migrants desperate to reach England made a renewed attempts to enter the Eurotunnel terminal overnight in the French port town of Calais, a police source has told the AFP news agency.

2,000 migrants, desperate to reach Britain, try to storm Channel Tunnel – 29 July 2015

<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/article/1844772/2000-migrants-desperate-reach-britain-try-storm-channel-tunnel>

Attempts by migrants desperate to reach England through the Channel Tunnel have reached a new peak, as about 2,000 migrants tried to storm the Eurotunnel terminal in the French port town of Calais.

GREECE

Greek island refugee crisis: local people and tourists rally round migrants – 9 July 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/08/greek-island-refugee-crisis-local-people-and-tourists-rally-round-migrants>

There have long been refugees trying their luck in these waters. But this year, amid the world's biggest wave of mass-migration since the second world war, the numbers arriving on this isolated shoreline have reached record levels.

Migrants Flood Greek Island of Lesbos – 10 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/video/world/europe/100000003757489/migrants-overwhelm-island-of-lesbos.html>

Thousands of migrants have come ashore this summer on the Greek island of Lesbos, a popular tourist destination. Some of them have to walk more than 40 miles to get to the main port of Mytilene.

ITALY

13 coffins: Italy buries 1st bodies from migrant shipwreck – 7 July 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/sns-bc-eu--italy-migrants-20150707-story.html>

Italy on Tuesday buried 13 of the hundreds of migrants who perished when a smugglers' fishing boat capsized and sank in the Mediterranean Sea, paying tribute to the victims in coffins adorned with roses. They were the first bodies retrieved in an Italian navy operation involving deep-sea divers and robots.

Mediterranean Migrants Arrive in Italy, Greece – More Deaths Reported – 14 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrants-arrive-italy-greece-more-deaths-reported>

Through last weekend, approximately 4,800 migrants were rescued in the Mediterranean and brought to Italian and Greek ports. The Italian Coast Guard saved 3,720 migrants in the Channel of Sicily, while Hellenic maritime forces brought to safety another approximately 1,100 migrants.

Italy Arrests 3 Smugglers From Boat Where Diabetic Girl Died – 18 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/07/18/world/europe/ap-eu-italy-migrants.html>

Police in Sicily have arrested three Egyptians who allegedly were in charge of a smuggling boat on which a 10-year-old Syrian girl with diabetes died after the smugglers threw her insulin overboard.

KOSOVO

IOM Supports Private Sector to Target Irregular Migration Push Factors in Kosovo – 7 July 2015

<http://www.iom.int/news/iom-supports-private-sector-target-irregular-migration-push-factors-kosovo>

IOM recently awarded nearly 3 million euros to local businesses with the aim of improving their productivity, competitiveness, export capability, innovation and ultimately foster Kosovo's overall economic growth.

SERBIA

After Hungary's Fence Plan, Serbia Says to Step Up Migrant Controls – 1 July 2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/07/01/world/europe/01reuters-europe-migrants-serbia.html>

Serbia will step up efforts to halt illegal immigrants crossing its border from Macedonia, Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic said on Wednesday, after Hungary announced it would erect a fence on its border with Serbia to stop the migrant flow.

SPAIN

Criminal Gang Behind People Smuggling and Human Trafficking Dismantled – 1 July 2015

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/criminal-gang-behind-people-smuggling-and-human-trafficking-dismantled>

Europol supported the Spanish Guardia Civil in investigating and arresting 17 alleged members of a Chinese criminal network. The network was involved in smuggling irregular migrants from China to Spain, and then from Spain to other countries such as the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Canada. Some of the victims were coerced into forced prostitution.

UNITED KINGDOM

Heathrow plane stowaway identity 'remains unknown', Met says – 15 July 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-33532830>

A stowaway believed to have clung to a plane before falling to his death remains unidentified almost a month later, the Met has said.

Tilbury Docks container death case: One man guilty of people smuggling – 23 July 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-essex-33608042>

A man has been found guilty of attempting to smuggle 35 Afghan Sikhs into the UK in a shipping container.

Tilbury container death: man guilty of smuggling 35 immigrants – 23 July 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jul/23/tilbury-container-death-man-guilty-smuggling-35-immigrants>

A man has been found guilty of smuggling 35 immigrants into the UK in a container in which one man died.

Tilbury Docks container death: Man found not guilty – 28 July 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-essex-33686566>

One of four men accused of attempting to smuggle 35 immigrants into the UK in a shipping container, in which one man died, has been found not guilty.

Tilbury Docks immigrant smuggling case men face retrial – 29 July 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-essex-33708973>

Two men accused of attempting to smuggle 35 immigrants into the UK in a shipping container, in which one man died, are to face a retrial.

Ministers in talks with exporters over Calais migrant crisis – 30 July 2015

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-33717721>

The Scottish government is holding talks with exporters in an effort to prevent them losing out as a result of disruption at the Channel Tunnel in Calais.