

Refugee Action Coalition

17 March 2015

MEDIA RELEASE ROCK THROWING NAURUANS SERIOUSLY INJURE REFUGEE COUPLE

An Iranian refugee couple was hospitalised last night (Monday) after being attacked by rock-throwing Nauruans (photos attached).

Around 10pm, Nauru time, the married couple was riding their motorcycle past the Menon Hotel when they were hit by a shower of rocks.

The motorcycle crashed after the male driver was knocked unconscious when one rock struck him on the head as they rode past the hotel.

The husband had regained re-gained consciousness a couple of hours later in the hospital and was able to talk to other refugees. The full scale of his injuries, and those of his wife are not known.

The attack is the latest in a series of physical attacks by locals on refugees. In a similar incident last November, an Iranian refugee was blinded in one eye after being hit by one of the rocks thrown by locals.

Ten days ago, a six year old asylum seeker lost two teeth when a Nauruan guard threw rocks at children inside the family camp.

Following protest last week, the refugee camp was stoned by around 25 Nauruan locals.

“We fear for the safety of the refugees on Nauru. There is no sign that the police take these attacks seriously. In some cases, the police do not even come to the scene of the attack,” said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

“We fear that anti-refugee feeling in the Nauruan community is being encouraged by the Nauruan government’s use of force to repress peaceful protests. There is a minority already willing to physically attack refugees.

“Nauru is a hell-hole for asylum seekers and is unsafe for refugees. Australia’s offshore policy of dumping asylum seekers on Nauru has created an impossible situation. The refugees have no future; Nauru has said there will not allow resettlement. But Australia is paying tens and tens of millions to the Nauruan government to keep them on the island.”

Ten refugees, including three children are due to appear in the Nauruan district court tomorrow (18 March) following the mass arrests

made on 4 March.

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