

2017 02 09 Refugee Action Coalition Media Release

## \$20,000 Bribes Offered As Border Force Threatens More Deportations from Manus

Australian Border Force officials have threatened to deport more Nepalese asylum seekers from Manus Island unless the asylum seekers agree to “voluntarily” return home.

The asylum seekers were told if they are forcibly deported they will get nothing, but if they agree to go voluntarily they will be paid up to \$ 15,000.

The ABF offered between \$20,000 and \$25,000 for each asylum seeker if they will go in a group.

In a grotesque Dutch auction with the lives of the asylum seekers, ABF officers told the group that another asylum seeker will be singled out for deportation in the next day or two and then another one. After that, they will call another meeting to see who is willing to go home, but the amount offered to return will be less.

Meanwhile there is no sign of the Nepalese asylum seeker who escaped the PNG police in the early hours of 9 February when they raided the Manus camp in the early hours to remove two Nepalese men.

“Contrary to Peter Dutton’s comments on Lateline, the Australian government is directly involved in the drive to deport asylum seekers from Manus Island,” said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

“Almost a year ago, the PNG Supreme Court ruled that asylum seekers had been unlawfully sent to Manus Island and ordered that the detention centre be closed. Rather than abide by the PNG Supreme Court order, the Australian government continues to violate the asylum seekers’ human rights.

“The government is holding people illegally and they are now compounding their crimes by trying to illegally deport people.

“With the US resettlement deal collapsing around their ears, the government needs to act quickly to evacuate Manus and Nauru and bring all the asylum seekers and refugees to the mainland.”

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