

2017 01 01 Refugee Action Coalition Media Release

2017? Same As 2016 - Brutality Rules On Manus.

It's Time To Bring The Refugees Here

Two Iranian refugees, Mehdi and Mohammad, have been savagely beaten by PNG police and PNG Immigration officials on New Year's Eve. (Photos attached. Mehdi in green T shirt. Others photos available on request.)

The two refugees were in the Lorengau settlement area on Manus last night when PNG officials arrested them around 8pm.

The refugees say they were doing nothing wrong and were only going to join New Year celebrations.

It seems their crime is being outside the detention centre

The two refugees are still in police custody this morning, 1/1/17, although no charges have been laid.

"That two refugees could be beaten so badly by PNG police on New Year's eve makes it clear that there is no freedom for refugees on Manus," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"We would expect the PNG police to be held accountable for the alleged assault, but the PNG police routinely act with impunity.

"The Australian government itself is a party to the brutality, having ignored the PNG Supreme Court decision in April 2016 to close the detention centre.

"The government says that the refugees on Manus may be considered for resettlement in the US - but any resettlement in the US seems to be months away if it happens at all. There has been no request even for Manus refugees to even show 'an expression of interest' in going to the US.

"But every day Manus detention takes its toll. At Christmas, Faysal lost his life. Slowly but surely the lives of all those being held on Manus is being lost.

"The latest bashings are just the latest indication of the reality of Australia's offshore detention regime. It's time the government stopped playing politics with the lives of innocent people, and brought all the asylum seekers and refugees to Australia."

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