



WHY MANUS AND NAURU MUST BE CLOSED

Why are asylum seekers held on Manus and Nauru?

Manus Island and Nauru first became the locations for Australia's offshore immigration detention centres in 2001, when former Prime Minister John Howard launched the "Pacific Solution".

Labor reopened them in 2012 as part of a plan to prevent any asylum seeker arriving by boat from gaining resettlement in Australia. Liz Thompson, a former migration agent involved in refugee-assessment interviews on Manus, described the process on SBS's *Dateline* as a "farce", saying, "Manus Island is an experiment in the ultimate logic of deterrence, designed to frustrate the hell out of people and terrify them so that they go home."

The purpose of dumping people in such remote locations is to deny them proper legal support, medical services and contact with the Australian public. Nauru is 3000 kilometres from the Australian mainland, while Manus Island lies 300 kilometres north of the main island of Papua New Guinea.

Conditions on Nauru

There are around 1000 asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru, 370 of them still in the detention centre.

Offshore detention is designed to be so brutal that asylum seekers are forced into despair and agree to go back home to whatever they have fled.

On Nauru, according to Dr Robert Adler, a paediatric psychiatrist who worked there providing medical services:

"Families were living under a marquee, separated from one another with plastic sheets, with no easily accessible toilet or kitchen facilities, no privacy and no air-conditioning in 40 degree heat".

Since late 2014 there have been a series of bashings, robberies and rapes on asylum seekers and refugees, as locals blame them for "taking jobs" and bringing high-handed Australian expats to their island.

The change to an "open centre" arrangement, where the detention centre gates are open, has changed little. There is no other accommodation outside the centres for people to move to. There is not enough transport to take more than a fraction of the asylum seekers out of the camp at any one time. And many are too afraid to leave the camps because of the threat of bashings and rape.



Nauru's war on refugee women

Lateline recorded 20 rapes or sexual assaults of refugee women on Nauru in one year.

Nazanin, an Iranian asylum seeker raped in May 2015, was only brought to Australia in August that year. Recommendations from doctors in Australia and Nauru that Nazanin's brother and mother be brought to Australia to aid her recovery were ignored for six months before they were finally brought to be with her.

The case of Abyan, the raped Somali refugee, exposed the lies and brutal mistreatment of refugees by the Minister for Immigration, Peter Dutton and the Immigration Department. Dutton lied when he said Abyan had changed her mind and no longer wanted a termination. *The Guardian* reported that he ignored three separate IHMS recommendations to transfer Abyan, the first on 16 September, confirming advocates' version of events.

Manus Island

There are around 870 refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island. *Amnesty International* described the situation on Manus Island as "tantamount to torture", after visiting the centre in November 2013.

In February 2014 Reza Barati was murdered in the Manus Island detention centre during an attack on asylum seekers by PNG guards. During the attack another man was shot in the hip and others lost eyes. Threats from locals against the asylum seekers continue.

Medical and other services are grossly inadequate.

In August 2014 a second asylum seeker, Hamid Kehazaei, died after a simple skin infection developed into septicaemia. Former Manus Island doctor John Vallentine told the ABC's *Four Corners* that the centre was "just a disaster, medically", saying it was just "too remote" to provide proper services there.

Another two refugees died in 2016, Kamil Hussein by drowning and Faysal Ahmed, after also being denied proper medical care.

Infections and skin diseases are rife among the asylum seekers on Manus Island. In addition to the extreme humidity, broken toilets mean asylum seekers are forced to walk through raw sewerage, often barefoot.

About one in six people living on Manus Island contract malaria each year. Asylum seekers suffer "snakes inside their accommodation, malaria, lack of malaria tablets, no mosquito nets, [and] inedible food that often has cockroaches in it", according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Close the camps

On 26 April 2016 the PNG Supreme Court held that detention on Manus Island was unlawful and the detention centre would have to close. Further court action in PNG is under way, in an effort to force both PNG and Australia to act on the ruling.

But there is nowhere else for the Manus asylum seekers and refugees to come but Australia. Neither Nauru nor Manus Island can provide safety, security or a future for asylum seekers or refugees. PNG is a poor country that is unable to accommodate refugees permanently. And it is now clear that asylum seekers' lives are in danger if they stay there.

The attempt to send refugees to Cambodia has also proven farcical. Just seven have been "resettled" there, at a cost of \$55 million. Only three remain there as of May 2017, with the others returning home in despair.

Malcolm Turnbull's US resettlement deal looks less and less likely since the election of Donald Trump. Even if some refugees get to the US, many will miss out

The asylum seekers and refugees must be brought to Australia, the country the whole world views as responsible for them. The offshore detention centres on Manus Island and Nauru must be closed. It's time to #BringThemHere

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Reza Barati: Murdered on Manus

On 17 February 2014, local G4S personnel brutally attacked asylum seekers on Manus Island, armed with guns, machetes, pipes and sticks. PNG Police and the PNG 'mobile squad' also entered the facility.

This resulted in the murder of Reza Barati, a 23-year-old Faili Kurd from Iran, and injuries to at least 62 other asylum seekers. One man was shot in the hip and others lost eyes.

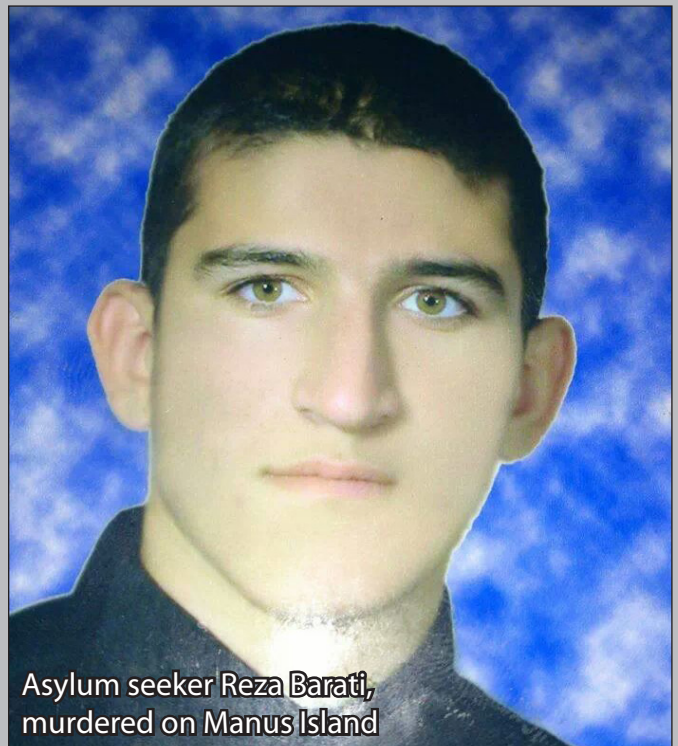
This was an act of retribution against asylum seekers after they had been holding protests for a month, demanding that the processing of their claims begin.

Although the attacks were carried out by PNG personnel, responsibility ultimately lies with the Australian government. The detention centre is funded and run by Australian authorities.

Hamid Kehazaei

Hamid died from a simple skin infection that turned into septicaemia on Manus Island in August 2014. **Medical documents leaked to the media confirm that negligence and inadequate care caused his death.**

Medical staff recommended to the Immigration Department that he be "urgently transferred" to Port Moresby rather than continue to receive inadequate treatment on Manus. But this didn't happen, for over 24 hours.



Asylum seeker Reza Barati,
murdered on Manus Island

By the time Kehazaei arrived in Port Moresby it was too late. He suffered a heart attack, and was transferred a Brisbane hospital the next day. His family agreed to turn off his life support when he was confirmed brain dead. **Medical staff failed to use the correct anti-biotics recommended by PNG health guidelines.** If they had, he would likely have survived.