

## mass protest by iranian asylum seekers in sweden

In response to a call by the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) – Sweden Branch for mass protests and actions against the inhuman asylum policies of the Swedish government, Iranian asylum seekers in several cities and refugee camps held protest actions around the country. The actions started on November 21, 2000 in Holetferd and spread to Hova, Malmo, Lerum, Gothenburg, Stockholm, Gimo and Bodin by December 22. In most cities and camps, offices of the ruling parties and government were occupied

and asylum seekers staged sit-ins. In Stockholm, the office of Amnesty International was occupied and the representatives of the striking asylum seekers met with an AI delegation. The protesting asylum seekers also organised protest marches and held press conferences. News of their actions was widely reflected in the national and popular press.

Numerous political, social and humanitarian organisations lent their support, including

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## another woman sentenced to death by stoning in Iran

Once again, an Islamic court in Iran has sentenced a woman to death by stoning. A 38-year-old woman from Mehr Shahr, near the city of Karaj, has been handed this abhorrent sentence. Under the Islamic penal code of Iran, any form of association or friendship between the sexes outside marriage is punishable by flogging, imprisonment, forced marriage and stoning to death. For adultery, the penal code accords stoning or flogging depending on whether the accused are married or unmarried. The law stipulates the size of the stone, which must be used

in stoning to ensure maximum suffering of the accused. The man involved in the relationship has also been given a death sentence.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) condemns the Islamic Republic of Iran, the barbaric act of stoning and the death penalty. It calls on all groups and individuals to demand the release of the woman and man and the abolishment of stoning and the death penalty. send your protest letters to:

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## Editorial

# new year resolution

by maryam namazie

While we celebrate the New Year and make resolutions on changing our lives, many have died trying to do just that:

\* Around 50 asylum seekers, including from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Iran and Afghanistan, died in a shipping accident in the Mediterranean Sea near southern Turkey on New Year's Day.

\* A Zimbabwean was killed while trying to sneak into the United States from Canada by clinging to the underside of a Greyhound bus.

\* A young Bulgarian woman died of cold while crossing Mount Belles from Bulgaria, a passage used by many for entry into Greece.

\* A two-year-old Afghan was killed when a lorry crowded with Afghan asylum seekers overturned in southeast Iran.

\* Viliami Tanginoa, a 52 year old Tongan, died after jumping head-first from the top of a basketball ring at Maribyrnong detention center in Australia on the Friday before Christmas to escape deportation.

\* A stowaway died after

plunging from a plane at Gatwick airport in London hours after the body of another stowaway was found nearby. The man who died on Christmas Day fell from the undercarriage of a British Airways jet just after it had taken off.

\* A 52-year-old Colombian woman who was denied

floor of a hotel while trying to escape Japanese immigration officials along with her three-year-old granddaughter, who was slightly injured in the fall.

\* Three Iraqi Kurd asylum seekers drowned after being forced off a smuggler's boat into frigid, choppy waters off Italy's southeastern coast.

and a woman, said to be two months pregnant, were reported missing and believed drowned.

\* At least three asylum seekers were missing and feared drowned, off Australia's remote northwestern coast.

\* Two young Albanian asylum seekers travelling in the trunk of a car from Greece's northern border were burnt alive after their vehicle crashed and burst into flames.

\* A thirty year old Cameroonian asylum seeker died as he was being expelled from Budapest airport.

\* Slovenian police shot dead a man transporting Iranian asylum seekers....

While we remember them and countless other victims of vile regimes and Fortress Europe/West in this New Year, let's add one more resolution to our list - to fight uncompromisingly for the right to asylum and movement.



(all pictures courtesy of the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism)



entrance into Japan fell to her death from the fourth

One man's body was washed ashore while another man

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the Left Party of Sweden, Western and Northern Branch, the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Sweden, The Leftist Women Centre, Young Communists League of Iran – Sweden, a member of the Left Party of Sweden and member of Parliament, Amnesty International, Sweden, The Social Justice Party of Sweden, People's Party, Gothenburg, Social Democratic Party, Malmo, Chair of the Social Democratic Party, Member of Parliament, Children First, Sweden, International Campaign in Defence of Women's Rights in Iran, Asylum Seekers and Refugees' Defence Group, etc.

The IFIR-Sweden Branch will continue its advocacy efforts to ensure that the legitimate demands of the protesting asylum seekers are met, including:

- \* Recognition of Iran as an unsafe country;
- \* An end to the deportation of asylum seekers to Iran;
- \* Application of international rights standards on all cases;
- \* Immediate resolution of cases and the right to asylum.

## unhcr office in pakistan occupied by asylum seekers

On December 12, over 120 Iranian and Iraqi asylum seekers seized the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Islamabad, Pakistan in protest to the policies and practices of the UNHCR.

Around 80 asylum seekers have been arrested and imprisoned as a result.

The Federation calls on the UNHCR to address the legitimate demands of the asylum seekers, including expedited and improved

determination procedures.

IFIR also demands that the detained asylum seekers be immediately released.

Send your protest  
letters to:  
[pakis@unhcr.ch](mailto:pakis@unhcr.ch)

## iranian asylum seeker in holland hangs himself

In December 2000, Rasoul Mavali, an Iranian asylum seeker who had taken refuge in Holland 6 and half years ago, committed suicide after receiving a deportation order. Mavali ended his life by hanging himself rather than return to Iran. He was the thirty-eighth Iranian asylum seeker in Holland who has committed suicide.

The Dutch government's policy of deterrence, dehumanisation and degradation pushes traumatised victims of persecution and violence to despair. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) condemns the Dutch government's anti-refugee policy and holds it accountable for Mavali's death.



# international refugee news

**\* Iran and Italy have agreed to step up their joint efforts to combat 'illegal immigration' and organised crime.**

The Italian Interior Minister said that one of the first measures would be the establishment of a committee of experts from the two countries. The agreement strengthens a protocol signed two years ago between Rome and Teheran. (BBC World, January 7, 2001)

**\* Four rightwing extremists were remanded in custody after a violent rampage in which skinheads attacked and wounded foreigners, including a 24-year-old Lebanese asylum-seeker, a 17-year-old ethnic German from Ukraine, two 16-year-old youths and a 44-year-old man, in the east German town of Cottbus. On New Year's morning, a Jewish couple were also harassed, insulted and threatened with death by extremists in Cottbus.** (Agence France Presse, January 5, 2001)

**\* Turkish authorities raised the death toll in a shipping accident to 10, after doctors concluded that a severed leg that washed up ashore belonged to a refugee**

**who was apparently torn apart when the ship split in half. For the past several days, body parts have been washing up on the shores of southern Turkey near where the ship hit rocks and broke in half during a storm on New Year's Day.** The

coast guard retrieved nine bodies from the ship, which was carrying 'illegal immigrants' to Greece. Thirty-three people, including crew were rescued after the disaster. Some 40 others remain missing. Most of the immigrants were from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Authorities called off rescue efforts saying there was little hope of finding other survivors. (The Associated Press, January 5, 2001)

**\* The Iranian director-general of foreign nationals employment department in the Interior Ministry said that the borders should be walled up to prevent the flow of foreign national to the country.** He said that 1.2m foreign nationals work illegally in Iran, mostly from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iraq. Some 1.4m Afghans still remain in Iran, half of them illegal residents. (IRNA news agency, Tehran (via BBC), January 5, 2000)

**\* A Zimbabwean foreign student was killed while trying to sneak into the United States from Canada by clinging to the underside of a Greyhound bus** was apparently making a

desperate bid to illicitly cross the border after U.S. authorities revoked his visa for entering the United States with a family member concealed in his car. (National Post (Canada), January 4, 2001)

**\* The number of people who requested asylum in Germany last year was 78,564, its lowest annual level since 1987.** The number of would-be refugees was 16,549 less than in 1999, a fall of 17.4 percent. The level of requests, which resulted in recognition of refugee status, remained unchanged in 2000 at three percent. The proportion granted protection against expulsion rose from 4.5 percent in 1999 to 7.9 percent last year. Most of the people seeking asylum in Germany last year were from Iraq (11,601), Federal Yugoslavia (11,121), Turkey (8,968), Afghanistan (5,380), Iran (4,878) and Russia (2,763). For 1999 the figures were Iraq (8,662), Federal Yugoslavia (31,451), Turkey (9,065), Afghanistan (4,458), Iran (3,407) and Russia (2,094). (Agence France Presse, January 4, 2001)

**\* Italy and Slovenia will set up joint police patrols for a trial period to fight 'illegal immigration' on their border.** Austria and Italy earlier set up joint police patrols in cross-border trains.

Last year more than 15,000 people were detained for illegally crossing the border between Italy and Slovenia and most of them expelled, compared to only 4,397 in 1999. (Agence France Presse, January 4, 2001)

**\* Police arrested 25 'illegal immigrants' after more than 20 Iraqi Kurds clashed with 15 Afghans who apparently attempted to board a ship bound for Italy.** A total of eight people, four Afghans and four Kurds, were injured during the clashes and were transported to a hospital for treatment. The arrested, including those injured, are to be deported. (The Associated Press, January 4, 2001)

**\* Australian Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock heads to Europe and the Middle East as part of the government's campaign to curb 'illegal immigration' and halt the growth in people smuggling. During his trip he will visit Swedish officials to discuss alternatives for the detention of women and children in remote parts of Australia following a wave of protest from human rights groups. Ruddock will also use his trip to meet with ministers and officials in Iran, Dubai, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan in a bid to close new people smuggling markets. He will**

take with him a video that drew heavy criticism last year for highlighting the dangers presented by sharks and crocodiles to illegal arrivals in remote parts of Australia. (The Australian Associated Press, January 4, 2001)

**\* Thousands of refugees to Canada who lack identity documents could find it easier to obtain landed immigrant status under a new agreement.** The Canadian government recently agreed to relax the identity requirement after representatives of the Somali community challenged the provision in the Federal Court of Canada as discriminatory. **Under the court-sanctioned agreement, refugees who lack satisfactory identification may provide two sworn declarations attesting to their identity.** (National Post (Canada), January 3, 2001)

**\* An Algerian man was yesterday fighting for his life after being stabbed repeatedly in a racist attack.** (The Guardian (UK), January 2, 2001)

**\* Army tents were set up and blankets handed out to around 1,500 asylum seekers lined up in the cold outside Belgian government offices to file applications before the deadline cutting benefits.** The changes do away with direct cash payments to people while their applications for asylum are being considered. Instead, asylum seekers will only have the right to limited material help, such as clothing, food and

public housing in places like old military barracks. (The Associated Press, January 3, 2001)

**\* A young Bulgarian woman died of cold while crossing Mount Belles from Bulgaria, a passage used by many for illegal entry into Greece.** (Reuters, January 3, 2000)

**\* Three boats carrying 306 suspected 'illegal immigrants' have been intercepted off Australia's remote northwest coast.** 781 people had been taken from 11 boats and detained by immigration officials in the final two weeks of 2000. (Reuters, January 3, 2001)

**\* After scores of complaints and lawsuits concerning the physical and mental abuse of immigrants detained in county jails and other detention centers, the US Immigration and Naturalization Service has issued national standards for the treatment of its detainees. Advocates for immigrants say that conditions may not improve even after the standards are in place because they do not have the weight of law and could prove impossible to enforce.** The advocates also argue that the standards do not address important issues like the frequent transfers of detainees without the notification of their lawyers. (The New York Times, January 2, 2001)

**\* This year, Buffalo, New York has been a depot for a record number of asylum seekers - more than 4,200 -**

**that have found haven in the refugee shelter Vive La Casa on their way to Canada.** Roughly, 80 percent to 90 percent are first funnelled through Vive to fill out the proper paperwork. From there, most go to the Peace Bridge, where they make a refugee claim. After a few hours, the refugees are free to go - often to meet friends or family already in Canada - until a government hearing is scheduled on whether they will be allowed to stay in Canada. (The Buffalo News, December 31, 2000)

**\* Asylum seekers in their thousands are drifting back to London, England after dispersal, or are simply choosing to remain in the capital or the South East without any money for housing.** Only 9,340 have so far been dispersed though the compulsory dispersal system introduced last April was to house 65,000 people across the UK by next April. According to the British Refugee Council, 'Many asylum seekers are giving up their right to accommodation and squeezing into already cramped conditions with relatives so they can reach proper legal support, pursue their claims with the Home Office or simply feel safe.' (The Observer (UK), December 31, 2000)

**\* Thirty-four Afghan and Iraqi 'illegal immigrants' have been detained this weekend in eastern Austria. A group of 19 Afghans, including four women and five children, were detained**

**Sunday near Austria's borders with Hungary and Slovakia. A second group of 15 Iraqis was picked up Saturday. According to Austrian television, 6,000 'illegal immigrants' have been detained in the past year — 682 in December alone — along the country's borders with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Slovakia. Austria has deployed 2,200 soldiers to control its eastern borders. Since the deployment 10 years ago, nearly 58,000 'illegal immigrants' have been detained.** (British Broadcasting Corporation, December 31, 2000)

**\* A two-year-old was killed and 65 people injured when a lorry crowded with 'illegal' Afghan immigrants overturned in southeast Iran.** 120 people were crammed aboard the vehicle, which flipped over outside the provincial capital of Zahedan. Several of the injured are in serious condition. A joint 'repatriation' programme administered by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has sent some 200,000 Afghans back home in the past year. (Agence France Presse, December 31, 2000)

**\* A Sri Lankan inmate of the Maribyrnong immigration centre in Australia claimed he and two men were thrown into isolation cells for six days and maltreated after giving statements to police about the death of fellow detainee Viliami Tanginoa. Tanginoa died in his arms after jumping headfirst**

**from the top of a basketball ring on the Friday before Christmas.**

Tennakoon said he had warned staff that Tanginoa might jump from the pole, which he had climbed to evade authorities and so delay his deportation to Tonga.

Australasian Correctional Management is the private company that runs the centre. After Tanginoa crashed to the basketball court, there was a period of disturbance during which glass was broken and a room burnt. Inmates state the 52-year-old Tongan was taunted while he balanced on the basketball pole, that one guard shot a basketball at the ring and that another guard placed a cigarette on the ground beneath him, suggesting he jump for it. All but eight of the 67 detainees at Maribyrong had refused food yesterday out of respect for Mr Tanginoa. (The Age (Australia), January 2, 2001)

**\* UK Police were running tests on a knife found under the body of a Turkish asylum seeker who was left fighting for his life after a racist attack on Christmas Eve. Cumali Sinangili, 41, was in a critical condition at a London hospital after being stabbed in the eye and beaten around the head in what was described as a "gut-wrenching attack" carried out in Bermondsey, south London. (The Independent (UK), December 29, 2000)**

**\* More than 5,000 migrants have been lining up for a week in front of a**

**Barcelona, Spain police station to request a "foreigner identification number." Authorities attribute the flow of new migrants to a rumour spread by smuggling rings saying that Spain is about to grant immigration status to all newcomers.**

Such documents are rarely handed out in Spain and thousands of requests for the numbers in the southern city of Almeria earlier this month have been rejected. (Agence France Presse, December 29, 2000)

**\* Authorities in Spain intercepted 800 boats with undocumented African immigrants this year, 68 percent more than the 1999 total.**

When the government's process of regularization of the status of undocumented immigrants was launched in early March, 226,570 application forms were filed. Of that total, 137,454 were accepted, 61,365 cases are still pending review, and 27,751 people were served with deportation orders. (Inter Press Service, December 28, 2000)

**\* The Burmese government has started to impose severe jail terms on Chinese nationals for illegal entry.**

On 20 December, Mu-se Township Court sentenced one human trafficker and 14 Chinese, who illegally entered Burma to jail terms ranging from four to 14 years. (Democratic Voice of Burma, Oslo (via BBC), December 29, 2000)

**\* A discrepancy between the French and English versions of Canada's**

**Immigration Act could provide a legal loophole allowing entry to immigrants with mental disorders.**

An immigration lawyer is arguing that a 17-year-old Hong Kong boy who is mentally retarded should be admitted to Canada on the grounds that his condition is a "disorder." In English, the Immigration Act denies entry to anyone suffering from a "disease, disorder or disability," but the French version mentions only two specific categories of people: those with a "maladie" or "invalidité." (National Post (Canada), December 27, 2000)

**\* Britain's Conservative Party has advocated Australian-style mandatory detention for 'illegal immigrants' to deter people from coming to the country.** Australia has been criticised by human rights bodies for its policy of locking up asylum seekers who have entered the country illegally, with allegations of abuse in detention centres in remote South Australia and Western Australia. (The Australian Associated Press, December 28, 2000)

**\* Eight prisons across Britain, including Belmarsh, Blundeston, Highdown, Holme House, Lincoln, Liverpool, Wandsworth and Winchester, have begun preparations to detain up to 500 asylum seekers as a "temporary measure" that will last at least until the end of next year.** The prisons will be expected each

to hold about 50 immigration detainees alongside inmates on remand. The prison service said the extra places were in addition to the 900 detainees already held in purpose-built immigration detention centres at Campsfield House near Oxford, Tinsley House at Gatwick airport and at Harmondsworth near Heathrow. **The latest Home Office figures show that asylum applications rose to 7,250 last month from 6,970 in October. Iraq (1,150 applicants), Iran (735) and Sri Lanka (650) were the main countries of origin.** (The Guardian (UK), December 23, 2000)

**\* UK Detectives were trying to identify a stowaway who died after plunging from a plane at Gatwick airport hours after the body of another stowaway was found nearby.** The man who died on Christmas Day fell from the undercarriage of a British Airways jet just after it had taken off. (The Guardian (UK), December 27, 2000)

**\* Two Britons were jailed for up to 15 months for trying to smuggle 28 Turkish immigrants illegally into Britain in their van. Another Briton was jailed for three months for trying to smuggle illegally into Britain a Sri Lankan in the trunk of her car.** Between January and September this year, 140 cases of illegal human smuggling have been heard by the court in Boulogne, a Channel port near Calais,

France. *The Prosecutor said legal action was rarely taken against the 'illegal immigrants' for "humanitarian reasons" since most came from countries where they were considered at risk, such as Iraq, Afghanistan or Iran. Most of them spoke English and for this 'cultural' reason headed for Britain.* (Agence France Presse, December 28, 2000)

**\* Refugee groups have challenged the UK Home Office claims that it has made a record number of asylum decisions - more than 11,500 cases - due to increased efficiency and more staff. But interest groups say many of these have been dismissed without even being considered for what is known as "non-compliance."** This, they say, often means simply failing to return a complicated form, in English, within 14 days. (British Broadcasting Corporation, December 27, 2000)

**\* About 100 African 'illegal migrants' briefly occupied the offices of the Vatican's envoy to France to press demands that French authorities give them papers allowing them to stay in the country.** Police expelled the demonstrators at the demand of the envoy after a couple of hours but no arrests were made. (Reuters, December 25, 2000)

**\* Djibouti arrested more than 5,000 mostly Ethiopian 'illegal**

**immigrants' over the past four days and deported the majority of them.** Interior Minister told state television *the immigrants were "undermining our morals, our customs and religious values while debasing the image of the capital city by scavenging dustbins and littering our streets with garbage."* (Reuters, December 24, 2000)

**\* Turkish police intercepted around 200 'illegal immigrants' from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan and were searching for some 50 others who slipped into the city.** Security forces acting on a tip raided a ship in the Istanbul port of Eminonu, detaining the clandestine passengers, who are to be deported. (Agence France Presse, December 27, 2000)

**\* A 52-year-old Colombian woman who was denied entrance into Japan fell to her death from the fourth floor of a hotel while trying to escape Japanese immigration officials along with her three-year-old granddaughter, who was slightly injured in the fall.** (Agencia EFE, December 28, 2000)

**\* Indonesian authorities detained 14 people at an airport on the island of Bali after they were caught with false passports trying to fly to Australia. They were believed to be from Iran or Iraq.** (Reuters, December 24, 2000)

**\* Australian customs officials have intercepted another boat carrying an**

**estimated 50 'illegal entrants.'** This is the eighth vessel carrying 'illegal entrants' to be intercepted in the last fortnight. (The Australian Associated Press, December 28, 2000)

**\* The highest number of asylum-seekers so far this year entered Britain last month, Home Office figures showed.** The number of applications has been rising through the autumn but reached a new peak of 7,250 in November. **Iraqi and Iranian nationals made up the largest proportion of those applying last month.** (Press Association (UK), December 22, 2000)

**\* The number of asylum seekers coming to Britain is on track to hit a record this year. Straw insists that without his new measures asylum applications would have risen even more quickly, as they have in some other European countries. But in a meeting with MPs recently he admitted he was largely powerless to reverse the trend.** 'If you can predict to me what is going to happen in terms of political stability or instability in Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran, Sri Lanka and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, I could then tell you whether I thought these pressures would continue,' he said. **'The principal driver of asylum applicants, unfounded as well as well-founded applicants, is political instability elsewhere, as well as rising poverty.'** (Daily Mail (UK), December 22, 2000)

**\* Three 'illegal immigrants' drowned after being forced off a smuggler's boat into frigid, choppy waters off Italy's southeastern coast.**

The victims were among 45 Iraqi Kurds. Some survivors said they were beaten and pushed overboard in the early morning darkness. They said the water was deep and some did not know how to swim. One man's body was washed ashore while another man and a woman, said to be two months pregnant, were reported missing and believed drowned. (Xinhua General News, December 22, 2000)

**\* At least three 'illegal immigrants' were missing, feared drowned, off Australia's remote northwestern coast.** The trio had apparently been aboard a boat detected at Lagrange Island in the Admiralty Gulf off the north Kimberly coast. But they were believed to have drowned after they attempted to swim to another nearby island. **The suspected drownings followed the recent loss of two other boats en route to Australia with over 160 people on board.** (The Australian Associated Press, December 22, 2000)

**\* The Federal Court of Canada has prevented the deportation of nine Chinese immigrant children because they could be persecuted by being "trafficked" again by their parents and human smugglers as members of a social group.** The children's refugee claims were rejected by the Immigration and

Refugee Board in February, but in a recent ruling the Federal Court in Vancouver overturned that decision. (National Post (Canada), December 21, 2000)

**\* The “punitive” new Irish refugee law ignores basic human rights concerns and denies fundamental legal safeguards to asylum-seekers, the Irish section of Amnesty International says.** The organisation’s refugee officer was particularly critical of the new powers in the Act to detain asylum-seekers in Garda stations. She also highlighted Amnesty’s concerns at accelerated procedures in the Act for processing asylum claims. (The Irish Times, December 21, 2000)

**\* Italy’s lower house of parliament voted to strengthen a 1998 law on immigration, calling for tough prison sentences for returnees and a fingerprint database to facilitate identification. However the text omitted an earlier provision, which would have allowed security forces to fire on suspected smugglers.** The new law now has to be ratified by the Senate. (Agence France Presse, December 20, 2000)

**\* Two young Albanian ‘illegal immigrants’ travelling in the trunk of a car from Greece’s northern border to the city of Thessaloniki were burnt alive after the vehicle crashed and burst into flames.** Cries of help were reportedly heard from inside

the trunk. The car’s remaining passengers four men, one woman and two children were seen abandoning the vehicle and fleeing into surrounding hills. (The Associated Press, December 21, 2000)

**\* Nepal has begun ‘repatriating’ Tibetans fleeing Tibet under pressure from China to tighten border security.** (Agence France Presse, December 21, 2000)

**\* An Iraqi asylum-seeker released from Woomera detention centre said a senior official from the Immigration Department threatened the release prospects of several detainees if they spoke to a lawyer visiting the centre.** (The Australian, December 21, 2000)

**\* The Supreme Court of Canada has allowed seven lobby groups to intervene in a pivotal national security case that will decide whether Canada can deport suspected terrorists to countries where they might be tortured.** All the groups are expected to argue against the deportation of Manickavasagam Suresh, alleged by Canada’s intelligence service to be an international leader of the Tamil Tigers. Amnesty International plans to argue “that the right to be free from torture is an absolute human right that applies to all people in all circumstances.” (National Post (Canada), December 20, 2000)

**\* A Chinese migrant was**

**recaptured here after escaping from custody by jumping out the window of a bus being used to transport him to a Vancouver, Canada jail.** Police recaptured the man about 30 minutes later. (Agence France Presse, December 20, 2000)

**\* Asylum seekers in Britain are being left hungry because of bureaucratic breakdowns in the government’s voucher system, a report covering the work of more than 50 charities claimed.** (The Guardian (UK), December 20, 2000)

**\* Britain must stop deporting asylum seekers to France and Germany because those countries may send them home to face renewed persecution from non-state actors, senior judges ruled.** (AFP, December 19, 2000)

**\* The International Helsinki Federation called for a legal investigation into the death of a Cameroonian national at Budapest airport as he was being expelled.** Police said the man suffered a heart attack before his expulsion. (AFP, December 19, 2000)

**\* Police shot dead a man trying to smuggle ‘illegal immigrants’ near the eastern Slovenia town of Ormoz.** The incident happened on Monday evening close to border with Croatia when police tried to stop a car with immigrants from Iran. (Deutsche Presse, December 20, 2000)

**\* Greek authorities subject ‘illegal immigrants’ to ‘appalling detention conditions’ and violate international standards by keeping asylum seekers in custody,** according to a report by Human Rights Watch, which demanded Greek authorities improve conditions in “filthy and roach-infested” holding areas, and end the practice of detaining people seeking political asylum. A visit by the group to the main immigrant holding facility in central Athens found people forced to sleep in corridors because of severe overcrowding. There was also inadequate access to medical care or legal representation. (The Associated Press, December 20, 2000)

**\* Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock deported a Russian citizen, Iaroslav Kopicov, just before he was due in court to pursue compensation for allegedly unlawful detention.** Ruddock’s lawyers asked the judge to throw out the case on the basis Kopicov had failed to turn up for the hearing but the reason he did not appear was that Ruddock’s department had “removed” him from the country three days before the October 19 hearing. (The Australian, December 20, 2000)

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