**March Media Summary**

**Home Affairs charged over Sydney detention centre death**

The Department of Home Affairs and its healthcare provider International Health and Medical Services (IHMS) have been charged with breaching federal work health and safety laws over the 2019 death of a man in immigration detention.

Federal work safety regulator Comcare on Wednesday revealed the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has filed two charges each against Home Affairs and IHMS following an investigation.

The charges relate to an incident in March 2019, where a 26-year-old Iraqi national took his own life at Sydney’s Villawood Immigration Detention Centre.

March 10, 2021

https://www.themandarin.com.au/151185-home-affairs-charged-over-sydney-detention-centre-death/

**Australia’s Rulers Are Clamping Down on the Right to Protest**

As we face a mounting ecological crisis, combined with racism and violence against First Nations people and refugees, Australia’s state and federal governments are ramping up anti-protest laws and even harassing the media. We need an organized fightback

10.03.2021

https://jacobinmag.com/2021/03/australia-right-to-protest-indigenous-led-movements

**Tasman deathtrap:** **the brutal toll of Australia’s deportation policy**

This week’s 9 News report showing the removal of New Zealand citizens from Australia – featuring a journalist thrusting a microphone in front of a deportee and asking ‘Our country doesn’t want you, are you excited to go home?’ and home affairs minister Peter Dutton calling it Australia’s way of ‘taking the trash out’ – has reignited controversy over Australia’s indiscriminate treatment of NZ citizens with criminal convictions, many for minor offences.

March 12, 2021

https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/12-03-2021/tasman-deathtrap-the-brutal-toll-of-australias-deportation-policy/

**China tells UN Australia's offshore detention centres violate human rights, don't have adequate conditions**

China says it is "deeply concerned" by the Australian government's operation of offshore detention centres, and called for the sites to be closed immediately.

In a statement to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, China alleged the detention centres "fall short of adequate medical conditions where a large number of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers have been detained over a long period of time or even indefinitely, and their human rights have been violated

13 March 2021

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-13/china-urges-australia-to-close-offshore-detention-centres/13245174

**Multilingual handbook on sexual violence and consent teaching women about rights in Australia**

Women across Australia have come forward in recent weeks to tell their stories of sexual abuse, but for culturally diverse women speaking out and seeking support is not an easy endeavour.

Multicultural Families Organisation's Rana Al-Mekarry said many women did not know their rights in Australia.

"We have migrants, refugees, women who are here on tourist visas, working holiday visas, and the laws in each country are very different," she said.

13 March 2021

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-13/sexual-violence-and-consent-handbook-in-10-different-languages/13220762

**Close offshore detention centres, China urges Australia**

China said it was "deeply concerned" by what it described as the Australian government's operation of offshore detention centres, and urged their immediate closure.

Relations between the two countries soured in 2018 when Australia became the first nation to publicly ban China's Huawei from its 5G network, and worsened when Canberra last year called for an inquiry into the origins of the coronavirus.

March 14 ,2021

https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/close-offshore-detention-centres-china-urges-australia

**Refugee** couple taken from hotel prison under cover of darkness to return to Nauru

NT News

She said the couple had come to **Australia** for medical treatment which had not been forthcoming and should not be forced to suffer the indignity of ...

https://www.ntnews.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=NTWEB\_MRE170\_a\_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ntnews.com.au%2Fnews%2Fnorthern-territory%2Frefugee-couple-to-be-taken-from-hotel-prison-in-handcuffs-under-cover-of-darkness%2Fnews-story%2F6fb537e8c06814ae06bfcc9f6da4940b&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium

**The small chips in civil society**

*Global and Australian humanitarian leaders say there is a growing trend of democratic governments muzzling civil society groups*

A case in Italy against charity rescuers has prompted concerns of a global tightening on civil society.

In the past few years, Australian charity and advocacy groups have faced their own tough battles with the government including crackdowns on charitable advocacy and accessing refugee camps.

And more recently, some in the sector described proposed regulations that would broaden the charities commissioner’s power to take enforcement action against charities even if they have not been charged with an offence, as reminiscent of Stalinist Russia.

16 March 2021

https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2021/03/the-small-chips-in-civil-society/

**Medevac refugees return to Nauru after more than a year in Australian hotel detention**

Two medevac refugees who spent more than a year in Darwin immigration detention and were flown back to Nauru this week have spoken of unliveable conditions during their period of confinement.

Before departing for Nauru, the married couple had been in a group of 11 refugees still detained in an immigration facility near the Darwin airport after arriving in Australia for medical treatment in 2020.

18 March 2021

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-18/tamil-medevac-refugees-return-to-nauru-from-darwin-detention/13248378

**Asylum seekers in PNG test positive to coronavirus, prompting calls for them to be brought to Australia**

Refugee advocates have called for the Australian government to bring all refugees and asylum seekers still in Papua New Guinea home amid the spiralling coronavirus outbreak there.

Ninety refugees and 40 asylum seekers remain in PNG's capital Port Moresby under the Australian government's Regional Resettlement Arrangement following the closure of the Manus Island detention centre in 2019.

17 March 2021

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-17/six-manus-refugees-test-positive-coronavirus-port-moresby-png/100014562

**Ally or no, New Zealand must stand up to callous Australia over 501 deportees**

Today a 15-year-old waits alone in a New Zealand quarantine facility, facing an uncertain future. Deported from Australia, he is not ordinarily resident here, and government agencies normally engaged for child protection are making plans for his care. Although Australia was his home, he was not Australian enough to be simply sanctioned in that nation for whatever infraction he is deemed to have committed.

17 Mar 2021

https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2021/mar/17/ally-or-no-new-zealand-must-stand-up-to-callous-australia-over-501-deportees

**Australia urged to adopt plan to fight 'resurgence of racism'**

Australia needs a new national anti-racism framework to address prejudice against Asian Australians due to the coronavirus pandemic and the legacy of “hatred” towards Muslims following the Christchurch attacks, the race discrimination commissioner says.

Chin Tan will on Wednesday launch a concept paper for the framework ahead of Harmony Day on 21 March. In a speech, he warns that racism is a “significant economic, social and national security threat”.

17 Mar 2021

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/17/australia-urged-to-adopt-plan-to-fight-resurgence-of-racism

**From Africa to Adelaide, the Yengi family’s story keeps growing**

A-League fans will know the names of Kusini Yengi, Adelaide’s young forward who scored their second goal last weekend against Melbourne Victory, and his younger brother Tete at Newcastle Jets. There are no prouder observers of these two burgeoning careers than their father Ben and mother Emma, but in Ben’s case from a distance of some 12,000km – specifically, from the border of South Sudan and Uganda in East-Central Africa where the 81-year-old continues to find ways of providing health and education services to the impoverished region he came from decades ago.

Mar 19, 2021

https://www.a-league.com.au/news/africa-adelaide-yengi-familys-story-keeps-growing

**Detained on Christmas Island, Fawaz doesn't know when he will see his kids again**

The 32-year-old was transferred to Christmas Island in September last year, after more than two years in Sydney's Villawood Detention Centre.

He's now pleading with the federal government to put an end to his immigration limbo and to let him see his family, who are thousands of kilometres away back in Sydney.

20/03/2021

https://www.sbs.com.au/news/detained-on-christmas-island-fawaz-doesn-t-know-when-he-will-see-his-kids-again

**Michael Gunner writes to Peter Dutton urging detained refugees be released as advocate has ...**

NT News

Michael Gunner writes to Peter Dutton urging detained **refugees** be ... CHIEF **Minister** Michael Gunner has written a letter to Federal **Home Affairs** ... Darwin **Asylum Seeker** Support & Advocacy Network (DASSAN) and 'Set Them ... Affairs spokesman said in a statement yesterday: “As with all **immigration** ...

https://www.ntnews.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=NTWEB\_MRE170\_a\_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ntnews.com.au%2Fnews%2Fpolitics%2Fmichael-gunner-writes-to-peter-dutton-urging-detained-refugees-be-released-as-advocate-has-visiting-privileges-revoked%2Fnews-story%2F81121e4982c6402a44b8a1dcffd800e7&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium

**Labor needs to change policy on refugees**

Labor’s immigration spokesperson Kristina Keneally was one of the prominent supporters of the Tamil family from Biloela, Queensland, at the March 5 protests marking three years since they were taken from their home at dawn.

March 19, 2021

https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/labor-needs-change-refugee-policy

**Iranian refugee Arad Nik sets up new life in Hobart, longs to call Australia home**

It is Persian New Year — Nowruz — this weekend, and Iranians around the world will be celebrating with food and family.

For Arad Nik, an Iranian refugee living in Hobart, it marks 10 years since he fled his homeland and last saw his son, Arta, 10, who lives with his ex-wife in Iran.

"It's hard to explain how much I miss him, Mr Nik said.

"I am missing part of my heart, part of my spirit.

21 March 2021

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-21/arad-nik-iranian-refugee-sets-up-new-life-but-not-yet-home/13263290

**Injustices are being committed in our name**

My wife and I wept as we watched the special report on ABC TV news (21/3) regarding the plight of families refused permanent residency in Australia because they have a child with a disability. As the report stated: “There is a law in Australia permitting discrimination on the basis of disability” when it comes to the Migration Act. While the story focused on two families in Melbourne and Perth, it it appears that our welcoming and inclusive society consistently draws the line at accepting children of temporary visa holders who have been born in Australia with a disability. Perhaps they should all be subject to Minister for Home Affairs Peter Dutton’s strategy of deportation to Christmas Island in the hope that the Australian public will ultimately forget the injustices committed in our name.

Where is our heart?

March 23, 2021

https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/injustices-are-being-committed-in-our-name-20210322-p57d12.html

**Morrison's forthcoming 'U-turn' on migration**

**AFTER TELLING temporary entrants to *"go home"* just 12 months ago and cutting the Migration Program ceiling by 30,000 per annum to *"bust congestion"*** as part of his 2019 pre-election Population Plan, Scott Morrison now says we must overhaul temporary migration in the post-COVID era to fill rapidly emerging skill shortages.

22 March 2021

https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/morrisons-forthcoming-u-turn-on-migration,14918

**Labor accuses Christian Porter of misleading parliament over medevac advice**

Labor has accused Christian Porter of misrepresenting legal advice on the medevac transfer bill by claiming it would have left the government without power to return refugees and asylum seekers to offshore detention.

Heavily-redacted legal advice, produced under freedom of information to the shadow attorney general, Mark Dreyfus, falls well short of Porter’s claims the bill would effectively end the offshore processing regime.

24 Mar 2021

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/mar/24/labor-accuses-christian-porter-of-misleading-parliament-over-medevac-advice

**PALM SUNDAY A DAY TO RALLY FOR REFUGEES**

Next Sunday, Palm Sunday, which recalls the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is a reminder of God’s kingdom drawing near. It is a day when many Christians reflect upon the gap between the kingdom that is on its way and our present time.

*Common Grace*, a justice ministry, is suggesting that Christians attend rallies around the country calling “for justice and dignity to be shown towards refugees here in Australia and for people seeking asylum around the world.”

March 25, 2021

https://www.eternitynews.com.au/australia/palm-sunday-a-day-to-rally-for-refugees/

**Home Affairs using hospitals, aged care homes as ‘alternative places of detention’**

Seventeen makeshift immigration detention centres – including suburban hotels and aged care homes – are being used by the Department of Home Affairs in a system refugee advocates say is mired in secrecy.

The makeshift detention centres include hotel and apartment-style accommodation – such as the Park Hotel in Melbourne and Brisbane’s Kangaroo Point Central Hotel and Apartments – as well as hospitals and mental health inpatient facilities.

March 25, 2021

https://www.smh.com.au/national/home-affairs-using-hospitals-aged-care-homes-as-alternative-places-of-detention-20210324-p57djt.html

**Confusion over at-risk refugees treatment**

A government lawyer has said it's "no longer the case" that Australia won't deport a refugee to a destination where they risk harm or death.

But the Department of Home Affairs insists that is not the Commonwealth's approach.

The lawyer made the comment during a Federal Court case of an Iraqi man who appealed the government's refusal to reinstate his visa.

26 March 2021

https://thewest.com.au/news/immigration/confusion-over-at-risk-refugees-treatment-c-2439009

**Be as kind and tough as Tony Abbott, British government urged on asylum**

Britain’s Home Secretary Priti Patel has been urged to be as tough and kind as Tony Abbott towards asylum seekers to stop illegal boat arrivals across the English Channel.

Patel, who met Abbott in London last October, set out a new plan for immigration for Britain aimed at punishing those who travel by boat, traditionally across the English Channel from France.

March 25, 2021

https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/europe/be-as-kind-and-tough-as-tony-abbott-british-government-urged-on-asylum-20210325-p57dto.html

**Australian government willing to repatriate Iraqi refugee knowing he would ‘likely be killed’**

An Australian government lawyer has said Australia was prepared to defy international law and send an Iraqi refugee back to his homeland, despite conceding he would likely be killed there.

In the federal court, the government argued it was prepared to forcibly repatriate a 27-year-old refugee, known in court documents as MNLR, to Iraq, despite acknowledging “he was likely to be harmed or killed there”.

27 Mar 2021

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/mar/27/australian-government-willing-to-repatriate-iraqi-refugee-knowing-he-would-likely-be-killed

**Confusion over what Australia will to do refugees at risk of harm if deported**

A government lawyer has said it’s “no longer the case” that Australia won’t deport a refugee to a destination where they risk harm or death.

But the Department of Home Affairs insists that is not the Commonwealth’s approach.

The lawyer made the comment during a Federal Court case of an Iraqi man who appealed the government’s refusal to reinstate his visa.

26/03/2021

https://7news.com.au/news/immigration/confusion-over-at-risk-refugees-treatment-c-2439007

**Oppose deportations and all anti-immigrant measures in Australia and New Zealand!**

The Socialist Equality Party (Australia) and the Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand) demand an immediate end to deportations and all the attacks on immigrants in Australia and New Zealand. In both countries, migrants are facing widespread, institutionalised discrimination and increasing racism and xenophobia.

29 March 2021

https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2021/03/29/nzau-m29.html