

THE NEWSCAST

THOUSANDS OF FRENCH DEMONSTRATED AGAINST THE "NEW IMMIGRATION" LAW

THE FRENCH INTERIOR MINISTRY ANNOUNCES THE PARTICIPATION OF 75,000 FRENCH PEOPLE IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS, AND THE LABOR UNION CONFIRMS THE PARTICIPATION OF 150,000 DEMONSTRATORS

Around 75,000 French citizens staged a protest against the new immigration law, demanding its withdrawal before the Constitutional Council's decision to approve it on Thursday, January 25. The French Ministry of the Interior reported that demonstrations took place throughout the country, including 16,000 protesters in the capital, Paris.

However, the General Confederation of Labour in France confirmed the participation of 150,000 protesters nationwide, including 25,000 in the streets of the capital, in massive marches that included a large number of individuals and various political and cultural figures. This protest aimed at expressing dissatisfaction with the new immigration law adopted by the parliament at the end of last December.

French citizens organized 160 marches across the country at the invitation of over 200 organizations, unions, political parties, and cultural figures to condemn the law, attempting to pressure the government to withdraw it before the Constitutional Council announces its decision.

At the same time, opponents of the law demanded its complete withdrawal, considering it contrary to the principles of the republic and the French constitution. Opponents believe that the provisions added by French deputies and senators to the government's initial text gave an excessively right-wing character to the law, which was initially supposed to focus on two aspects: one described as "repressive" regarding foreign offenders of misdemeanors, and the other promoting integration into society. However, it became difficult to provide social benefits or job opportunities.



BRITAIN CHARTERS SHIPS TO MONITOR THE ENGLISH CHANNEL FOR 36 MILLION POUNDS

The British Border Force has leased private ships to monitor small boats used by migrants in illegal migration across the English Channel at a cost of £36 million. The British maritime fleet includes 5 support ships and 6 coastal patrol vessels, some of which are 20 years old, prompting the Border Force to demand the replacement of fleet ships and the hiring of new patrol ships for the channel. The UK Home Office paid £36 million to private boat ownership companies for the lease of their vessels.

The UK Home Office published a contract announcement on its website aiming to lease support ships in the Dover Strait, with the contract set to commence on April 1, 2024, and last for a year. A spokesperson for the UK Home Office stated, "All commercial contracts adhere to government procurement rules designed to ensure the best value for taxpayers. We closely monitor the performance of contractors, including financial outcomes."

Opponents of the government argue that the delay in purchasing new ships will hinder the Border Force's ability to monitor the English Channel, delaying asylum seeker rescue operations. The British government had announced a plan to replace Border Force ships in 2021, with then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak pledging to retire fleet ships and introduce new vessels into service.



KUALA LUMPUR ARRESTS 4,026 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS



The immigration authorities in Kuala Lumpur have arrested 4,026 illegal immigrants in 870 enforcement operations across the country in the first 18 days of this year. In a statement, the authorities announced that a total of 9,169 foreigners were inspected, and 1,497 illegal immigrants were deported to their respective countries. Additionally, 42 employers were apprehended on charges of hiring illegal migrants.

The authorities emphasized that employers found to be hiring illegal immigrants can be punished under immigration laws, including those related to human trafficking and migrant smuggling. In one operation, the authorities uncovered 752 foreign nationals, leading to the arrest of 561 migrants from Bangladesh (205), Myanmar (200), Nepal (65), Indonesia (43), Pakistan (38), 3 from Sri Lanka, and 6 from Cambodia, India, and Sierra Leone, as well as one citizen from Cameroon.

The illegal immigrants, ranging in age from three months to 55 years, had exceeded their stay and lacked proper travel documents.

Libya deals a painful blow to smugglers and seizes shipments of migrants



The Military Region of Tripoli announced the interception of fuel smuggling convoys and vehicles carrying illegal migrants in several ambushes in the Libyan desert. The operations were described as a "painful blow to smugglers that has not been witnessed before."

The "Brigade 444" revealed details of the operation, stating, "To alleviate the fuel congestion in the capital, Tripoli, the forces managed to seize convoys of trucks carrying smuggled fuel, which were heading outside the country." Additionally, they mentioned, "We succeeded in apprehending vehicles loaded with illegal migrants who came from outside the country to cross the sea in migration operations supervised by organized international gangs coming from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and other countries."

200 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARRESTED IN GUATEMALA

500,000 IMMIGRANTS CROSS THE RUGGED DARIEN FOREST IN SEARCH OF THE "DREAM OF REACHING AMERICA"

Guatemala has arrested 200 illegal migrants near the border with Honduras, while hundreds heading to the United States were dispersed, allowing only 80 individuals with proper travel documents to continue their journey. The caravan, consisting of 500 people, departed from San Pedro Sula, northern Honduras, aiming to reach the United States. It marks the first illegal migration caravan in 2024.

Migration from Honduras began in 2018, involving thousands of people hoping for a better life in the United States. They traversed Guatemala and Mexico on foot, departing from the main bus station in San Pedro Sula, heading towards Corinto city, located at the border with Guatemala.

Honduras serves as a transit point for illegal migration from citizens of Haiti, Panama, and Colombia, crossing the challenging terrain of the Darien forest. Around 500,000 illegal migrants have crossed the Darien forest due to poverty and violence in their countries, seeking the American dream.

One migrant shared his journey, saying, "I joined the caravan with three other family members, risking everything to reach America. We live in our country without jobs and hunger." He confirmed organizing his family's travel through Facebook.

Government estimates in Honduras suggest that approximately 64% of the country's 10 million residents live in poverty. Human rights organizations estimate that between 700 and 1,000 Hondurans leave their country every day. The National Commissioner for Human Rights in Honduras (CONADEH) indicated that at least 5,709 migrants, mostly Venezuelans, entered Honduras illegally during the first week of January alone.



US SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY VISITS MEXICO TO DISCUSS "BORDER SECURITY" MECHANISM

The U.S. Department of State has announced an official visit to Mexico at the beginning of February in Mexico City to continue discussions on issues of illegal immigration and mutual cooperation. The statement from the State Department mentioned that the delegation will include the Secretary of Homeland Security, the U.S. National Security Advisor, the Deputy U.S. Attorney General, and the Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The meeting will address border security and combating illegal immigration, as well as the possibility of cooperation in dismantling networks smuggling undocumented immigrants from Mexico to U.S. territories. Additionally, discussions will cover dismantling criminal networks involved in trafficking drugs and weapons across the borders of both countries, along with the requirements for updating surveillance and security systems.

The announcement of this visit represents a success of talks held by the U.S. Secretary of State with his Mexican counterpart at the U.S. Department of State headquarters, within the framework of an invitation from Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on December 27th to intensify joint meetings between officials from both foreign ministries. This took place during the reception of the U.S. Secretary of State in the Mexican capital.

It's worth mentioning that 2.5 million migrants crossed the border from Mexico to the United States between October 2022 and September 2023.



INDIA: SEARCHING 22 SITES DESIGNATED FOR MIGRANT SMUGGLING



The Law Enforcement Directorate in the Indian state of New Delhi conducted inspection operations at 22 sites dedicated to illegal immigration. The inspections targeted buildings owned by two suspects involved in migrant smuggling, Bharatbhai Patel and Charanjeet Singh. The suspects are accused of freezing a family of four to death while attempting to enter the United States via Canada in 2022.

Investigations revealed the suspects' involvement in smuggling Indians into the United States since 2015, charging individuals between 60,000 to 75,000 rupees per person.

Mexico rescues 726 migrants from human trafficking gangs

Mexican authorities rescued 726 migrants who were being held captive by human traffickers in a warehouse in the state of Tlaxcala. They were forcibly confined in a storage facility in the town of San Antonio Cuaxomulco in the state.

Mexican authorities reported that among the victims were 75 children, and police arrested four human traffickers. Mexico serves as a significant transit point for migrants from South American countries heading to the United States. Migrants from Haiti, Ecuador, and Honduras often gather in Guatemala to cover a distance of 3,000 square kilometers to reach Mexico, hoping to continue their journey.

The U.S. Border Patrol has announced an increase in the number of migrants crossing the Mexico-U.S. border in the last weeks of 2023, with up to 10,000 migrants arriving daily.

According to estimates from the International Organization for Migration, 686 migrants have died or gone missing during the perilous journey from Mexico to the United States, making it the deadliest crossing compared to other illegal entry points into the U.S., including the Darien crossing and maritime routes in the Caribbean, which accounted for 1,457 casualties.

UNICEF has warned about the growing numbers of migrant children from Latin American countries, constituting 25% of the total migrant population. It emphasized that 91% of these minors are under 11 years old, leaving their countries in search of better living conditions, safety, or education due to poverty, violence, persecution, lack of economic opportunities, or the pursuit of family reunification.



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MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES RESCUE 184 MIGRANTS FROM DROWNING

The Moroccan Coastal Surveillance Forces have announced the rescue of 108 illegal migrants near the coast of the Dakhla region, including children and women from various African countries. The rubber boat had departed from Morocco en route to the Canary Islands but capsized due to sea currents. The forces transported the migrants to the hospital for necessary medical care and then handed them over to the relevant authorities in the region.

In a related context, two units of the Royal Moroccan Navy rescued two rubber boats, 39 kilometers southwest of Tarfaya and 41 kilometers northwest of Tan-Tan. On board were 76 individuals attempting illegal migration through maritime routes, including 54 from sub-Saharan Africa and 22 Moroccans. The Moroccan authorities stated that the two boats were headed to the Canary Islands, and the migrants were transported to the Moroccan ports of Laâyoune and Tan-Tan.



LE MAROC DÉCOUVRE UN RÉSEAU INTERNATIONAL DE TRAFIC DE MIGRANTS



Les autorités marocaines ont annoncé le démantèlement d'un réseau international impliqué dans l'organisation de la migration illégale et le trafic d'êtres humains. La police judiciaire de la ville de Salé, près de la capitale Rabat, a réussi à démanteler un réseau criminel spécialisé dans l'organisation de la migration illégale. Quatre individus, dont un ressortissant étranger de nationalité turque, ont été arrêtés pour suspicion de participation à l'organisation de la migration irrégulière. Les enquêtes ont conduit à l'arrestation de 30 candidats à la migration illégale, tous de nationalités étrangères provenant d'Inde, du Bangladesh et du Pakistan. Les autorités judiciaires mènent actuellement des investigations avec les suspects afin de découvrir toutes les circonstances et les détails de cette affaire, déterminant ses liens et ses ramifications potentielles tant au niveau national qu'international.

Austria and Iraq confirm the success of the plan to combat illegal immigration between the two countries

Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg affirmed that Austrian-Iraqi cooperation in combating illegal migration has achieved significant successes. Schallenberg had met with his Iraqi counterpart, Fuad Hussein, in Vienna, where he emphasized highly positive progress in bilateral relations. He noted that cooperation with Iraq has been developing well since the opening of the Austrian embassy in September of the previous year, especially in the areas of combating illegal migration and general security cooperation. Schallenberg stated that the cooperation with Iraqi authorities is close, with Austria focusing on assistance in return and reintegration, as well as measures to raise awareness about the risks of illegal migration. He explained that, in comparison with other EU member states, Austria has a very good track record in dealing with migration issues. Austria, as part of the European Union, is working on a project to warn potential migrants about the risks of becoming victims of human traffickers involved in "illegal migration."

