

As ICE continues to abduct mothers and students, one immigrant dies, another injured, attempting to climb border wall in San Diego

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On Tuesday, multiple outlets reported that two immigrants fell off the 30-foot border wall at the US-Mexico border in San Ysidro, California, leading to the death of one.

According to a US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) spokesperson, at around 11 p.m. Monday evening agents discovered both immigrants on the ground after they fell. One of them was unresponsive and later pronounced dead upon arrival to the hospital, while the other suffered unspecified injuries.

These deaths and injuries are entirely preventable and the fault of both the Democrats and Republicans who have poured billions of dollars into “militarizing” and “shutting down” the border as part of a broader war on the democratic rights of the entire working class.

While CBP and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) do not record deaths or injuries suffered by immigrants from falling, in 2022 UC San Diego Medical Center’s trauma ward reported a fivefold increase in injuries from falling from the wall, with deaths going from zero to 16 within a couple of years after the height of the wall was raised from 8 feet to 17 feet to 30 feet in 2019.

In 2024, Scripps Mercy Hospital and UC San Diego Health reported a 58 percent increase in falls, with 524 people suffering injuries or death after plunging off the structure, nearly two a day. This figure is nearly triple the 189 falls Scripps recorded in 2023, and more than double the 239 falls recorded in 2022.

Despite the most recent death, in the last two months falls from the border wall have actually decreased, with Scripps reporting only 10 incidents in January 2025 and no falls in February 2025. This is due in part to the deployment of thousands of active-duty troops and materiel to the border, including surveillance drones, soldiers, Stryker combat vehicles and concertina wire and other fortifications which have compelled immigrants to find alternate routes into the country.

Shortly after taking office, Trump shut down the CBP One mobile app which was effectively the only way people could make asylum claims and schedule appointments with immigration officials. This outright denial of people’s right to claim asylum violates international law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The shutting down of legal pathways forces desperate refugees and immigrants escaping poverty, violence and social instability to risk their lives through harrowing ordeals that entail extreme risk of injury or death. Left unsaid in the corporate press is the role of US imperialism in devastating large swaths of the globe, forcing immigrants to flee in the first place.

These policies compel immigrants to seek more rural passages into the country, which are much more dangerous and result in a slower response time in case of a medical emergency. Recently, three immigrants attempting to cross into the US near San Diego passed away in the Otay Mountains wilderness due to a storm that brought near freezing conditions on March 14. In a statement, the US Border Patrol said that people who travel through the Otay Mountains “often face the risk of dehydration, starvation, heatstroke, and hypothermia.”

The journey across the US-Mexico border through “non-official” routes is so risky it is considered the world’s deadliest land route for migrants. In 2022, the International Organization for Immigration (IOM) documented 686 deaths and disappearances of migrants along the border.

While comprehensive figures are not available yet for 2024, in the first eight months of the year, New Mexico reported 108 deaths of probable migrants along its border. This figure is more than 10 times what the state recorded in 2020 (nine) and 2019 (10). In 2023, the state reported 117 deaths over the year.

In addition to blocking virtually all entry into the United States, the Trump administration is continuing its fascist campaign targeting immigrants within the United States regardless of legal status. A growing number of students and workers who have lived in the US for decades have been disappeared or kidnapped by ICE agents across the country.

Rümeysa Öztürk, 30, a Fulbright scholar and student at Tufts University, remains imprisoned in an ICE detention facility in Louisiana after being kidnapped outside her home in Somerville, Massachusetts by the immigration Gestapo last week.

At a court hearing Thursday challenging her unlawful detention and kidnapping, lawyers for Öztürk read a statement she prepared from inside the facility.

“I am a Ph.D. student working with children and youth,” she wrote, adding:

We know that injustice in the world and systemic brutality towards people of color has long-lasting negative effects on children, youth, and other communities. My life is committed to choosing peaceful and inclusive ways to meet the needs of children. I believe the world is a more beautiful and peaceful place when we listen to each other and allow different perspectives to be in the room. Writing is one of the most peaceful ways of addressing systemic inequality. Efforts to target me because of my op-ed in the Tufts Daily calling for the equal dignity and humanity of all people will not deter me from my commitment to advocate for the rights of youth and children.

Despite a judge ordering Öztürk to remain in Massachusetts following her abduction, ICE thugs quickly moved her to Louisiana within 24 hours of her kidnapping. Öztürk's lawyers claim that family, friends and counsel could not locate or speak with her during this time.

Once they did locate her, they discovered she had suffered an asthma attack while en route to Louisiana. She subsequently suffered two more asthma attacks and has been unable to access her required medications.

Öztürk has not been accused of a crime and it seems she was targeted solely for co-authoring an op-ed which called on Tufts University President Sunil Kumar to uphold resolutions passed by the Tufts Community Union Senate. The resolutions passed by the students called on Kumar to recognize the genocide in Gaza, divest from companies that support it and stop selling products from Sabra due to their outsized support for the Israeli military. The op-ed was not "antisemitic" and did not evince any support for Hamas or the "Axis of Resistance"

On Thursday, the Council on American-Islamic Relations in Michigan posted an "alert" that Wayne State University police were targeting "Muslim and Arab students on campus demanding that they provide their name and identification and answer questions about a peaceful First Amendment Action that occurred on WSU Campus yesterday (April 2)."

Arizona Luminaria reported on Tuesday that eight international students at Arizona State University, located in Tempe, had their student visas recently revoked by the Trump administration. A spokesperson for the university told *Luminaria*, "These were not protest related."

Michael Kinstsher, an ASU graduate and president of United Campus Workers of Arizona, told the outlet that international students were being targeted and harassed on campus. "The letter I have seen do not contain any reason for the visa being revoked," Kinstsher told the outlet.

In addition to students, long-time residents are also being viciously targeted by the immigration Gestapo. *Newsweek* first reported on Tuesday that Angela Cristina Gonzalez Cardona, 50, a mother who has lived in the United States for nearly four decades was abducted by ICE agents on March 26 as she was leaving her driveway to go to work. In footage obtained by *Newsweek*, Cardona is seen hugging her youngest son, 22, who is autistic, before masked ICE

agents handcuff her and take her away.

In an interview with *Newsweek*, Claudia Gonzalez, Cardona's daughter, recalled that ICE agents said they were not leaving the property "empty-handed." Gonzalez, who was not home at the time, but spoke to family members who were, said ICE agents surrounded her mom's car as she was trying to leave. She recalled the agents tried to take her mother's boyfriend, "but he was telling them he was a US citizen and showed his Texas ID."

Gonzalez, 26, explained that her mother has lived in the US since she was 11 years old and that she was legally allowed to be in the United States pending a decision on her Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) application. Under VAWA, immigrants who have been victims of sexual crimes or domestic abuse can apply to stay in the US.

Gonzalez said that ICE agents were not interested in her mother's legal claims and refused to allow her to enter her home to obtain the paperwork to prove her case. "She asked to at least allow my little brother to take her things before she was taken in," Gonzalez told *Newsweek*. "She complied every step of the way. She assumed they'd give her a chance to show those documents but never allowed her to come back inside her home."

Cardona is currently incarcerated in a for-profit concentration camp run by CoreCivic.

Conditions inside detention facilities are not only inhumane, but deadly. At least two men have died at the Krome detention camp in Miami, Florida this year. Despite the facility nominally being for men only, at least four women who did not have a criminal record were recently detained there.

Recounting their horror to *USA Today*, the women recalled being taken to the facility on a bus that did not have a bathroom. The women were chained at the wrist, waist and chest for up to 12 hours on their way to the prison. Since there was no access to a toilet, the guards instructed the women to urinate or defecate on the floor.

Upon arriving at the facility, one woman described being "pushed in a room, filled with women like sardines in a jar. I will never forget those first seconds when I heard the door behind me locked." All four women said they had no access to potable water and one claimed she was fed nothing for 36 hours.

In an audio recording obtained by *USA Today*, one of the women describes how the guards refused to provide Benadryl unless she faked a serious illness. "I was told by guards that if I wanted anything I needed to pretend I had a seizure and fall down." She said, "Everyone acts like we're animals or something."



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