

Trump immigrant crackdown escalates: Suicide of detained Chinese woman, workplace raids, visas for South Sudanese immigrants and college students revoked

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The brutality of the Trump administration's ICE raids and mass arrests is reaching new heights. In the last week alone, a Chinese woman committed suicide at the Border Patrol Station in Yuma, Arizona; ICE raids rounding up dozens of people at workplaces from Washington to Texas took place; the visas of all South Sudanese passport holders are being revoked; and numerous international students are facing deportation following the revocation of their visas.

Increasing numbers of people who had permanent residency or visas in good standing are being seized and disappeared. These include immigrant students on college campuses who are being singled out for their political speech against the Gaza genocide.

Detained immigrants are being thrown into overcrowded and inhumane facilities, where they languish for weeks or months on end in violation of due process rights. Conditions in the facilities are deteriorating due to overcrowding.

In the past week alone, numerous universities across the country have released statements announcing that students had their visas revoked and student statuses terminated by the federal government. At least 48 students have had their education, career, and life upended in Trump's dragnet against immigrants, targeting anti-genocide and political opposition to the crimes of Israel and US imperialism.

Universities that released statements include:

California

• Stanford University: Four current students and two recent graduates had their visas revoked.

• UC Los Angeles: At least eight current students had their visas revoked.

• UC San Diego: Five students lost their visas and one was detained at the border, denied entry and deported.

• UC Berkeley: Four visas were revoked, including two for enrolled students and two for recent graduates on professional training visas.

• UC Irvine: Visa revocations were confirmed this week, though specifics were not disclosed.

Alabama

• University of Alabama: One student, Alireza Doroudi, a 22-year-old Iranian citizen, was abducted from his home just off campus and left incommunicado for two days before officials released his whereabouts.

Arizona

• Arizona State University: At least eight international students had their visas revoked this past week.

Massachusetts

• University of Massachusetts Amherst: Five international students had their visas revoked.

• Tufts University: At least one visa revocation was confirmed for Rumeysa Ozturk, a 30-year-old Fulbright scholar and doctoral student who was targeted due to her pro-Palestinian activism and abducted by masked immigration police who kidnapped her in an unmarked car.

Minnesota

• Minnesota State University, Mankato: Five students had their visas revoked.

New York

• Cornell University: Mamadou Taal, a British-Gambian Ph.D. student in Africana Studies, known for playing a leading role in anti-genocide protests, had his visa revoked and was forced to flee the US.

North Carolina

•North Carolina State University: Saleh Al Gurad, a Saudi engineering student, had his visa revoked and was forced to leave the US.

Oregon

•University of Oregon: The university confirmed the revocation of at least one student's visa.

Texas

•University of Texas at Austin: Two students (from India and Lebanon), employed under a training program, had their visas revoked.

Possibly hundreds of students have been abducted and disappeared by US immigration police in the first three months of the Trump administration. The targeting of students is aimed at upending all protected political speech, particularly opposition to US/Israeli genocide in Gaza.

A still unidentified 52-year-old Chinese woman took her own life while in custody on Saturday, March 29 at the Blythe Border Patrol Station in Yuma, Arizona. According to the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Professional Responsibility, the woman had been detained after overstaying her B1/B2 visitor visa. She was arrested in Needles, California and transferred to the Arizona facility.

The woman was among four Chinese immigrants who were pulled over by the CBP. Officials claimed that cash found on the immigrants "was believed to be proceeds from illegal activity and was seized for laundering." Nearly one-quarter of the foreign-born labor force in California are Asian immigrants, including immigrants of Chinese descent.

The CBP is seeking to cover up the facts surrounding the death. While the agency claims that multiple welfare checks were conducted, surveillance footage shows that the woman's lifeless body hung for two hours after she was shown making a noose and tying it around her neck. Furthermore, the CBP is required to notify officials within 24-hours after a death, a requirement put in place after the 2018 death of a seven-year-old girl in a New Mexico facility.

Conditions in the facilities are known to be horrendous. A federal judge wrote in a 2020 ruling that conditions in the neighboring Tucson sector of CBP facilities were so inhumane that they were "presumptively punitive and violate the Constitution."

At the El Paso Service Processing Center in Texas, at least eight Venezuelan immigrants alleged via video linked to media outlets that guards beat them at the end of February. Numerous videos posted on TikTok highlight the overcrowded and unsanitary conditions at the Krome Detention Center facility in Miami, Florida.

As of March 23, 47,892 people were detained in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody, an increase of 1,623 individuals in just two weeks.

According to the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR), among those detained by ICE, 49.9 percent have no criminal record, while most who have any record have only minor offenses such as traffic violations. This exposes the lie that the Trump administration is pursuing "criminals."

Early Tuesday morning, April 1, a raid conducted by the FBI, ICE, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and San Antonio Sheriff's Department led to 47 immigrants being detained in Hays County near Austin, Texas. While little information about the individuals has been released, it is known that the group included 25 men, nine single women, four female heads of households and nine children.

This seizure was met with protests. At one point protesters formed a human chain to block ICE vans carrying the detained immigrants from leaving the federal facility in Austin. The vehicles were halted for some minutes before Austin police were called in to suppress the protest. There has been little news coverage of the protest, but in footage documenting the incident, protesters yelled, "You can't kidnap children."

The DHS has claimed, without providing any evidence, that the arrests were of gang members or their associates connected to Venezuela's Tren de Aragua. Last July, the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) branded the gang a Transnational Criminal Organization.

Trump has invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to deny due process and carry out the immediate deportation of foreign nationals deemed "alien enemies" on the pretext of an immigrant invasion.

On Wednesday, April 2, immigration officials from ICE, CBP and DHS detained 37 immigrants at Mt. Baker's Roofing's warehouse in Bellingham, Washington.

A worker at the company for 12 years, Tomas Fuerte, told *Cascadia Daily News* that he's never before seen a raid on this scale. He said:

They arrived wielding their guns like they were going to shoot us, like we were criminals... They corralled us into a room in the back of the building. They had a list and pictures of everyone who was undocumented and took them away.

Those who were detained were taken in a bus to be transported to Tacoma or Tukwila Immigration and Customs Enforcement facilities, according to an officer on the scene.

ICE spokesperson David Yost issued a statement saying that the 37 people arrested had "fraudulently represented their immigration status and submitted fraudulent documents and/or information to seek employment."

Mt. Baker Roofing CEO Mark Kuske said in a statement that many of those detained had worked there for years as "tax-paying employees" and contributed to the community by constructing houses. Family members and friends waited for the investigation to finish to collect their loved ones' belongings and get answers as to where they are being taken.

Among those detained was Diocelina Nunez's son, who fled crime in Mexico and was living undocumented in the United States for 11 years, along with Laura Baldovino's family friend, a 19-year-old currently going through the asylum process. They said the 19-year old also fled violence in Mexico and had been in the United States for less than a year.

On Saturday, April 5, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the revocation of all visas held by South Sudanese passport holders. South Sudanese immigrants in the US had been granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) due to unsafe conditions in their home country. The Trump administration is vindictively retaliating against South Sudan's refusal to accept the return of its deported nationals.

This announcement is significant as it is the first time visa revocations are specifically targeting an entire nation. The move by the Trump administration amounts to a death sentence, as immigrants would be sent back to an active war zone.



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