

# *Human Smuggling on the Rise in Britain*

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London, July 4 (RHC)-- The number of smugglers prosecuted for bringing illegal stowaways into the UK in 2015-16 rose by 50 percent, according to Home Office statistics. Eighty-eight people were prosecuted over the crime compared to the 52 a year earlier, the Guardian reported Sunday.

According to Keith Vaz, the chairman of the home affairs select committee, the figures are “only the tip of the iceberg.” The figures were released in response to a parliamentary question asked by the Labour MP Gareth Thomas.

The unprecedented exodus of the refugees from their home countries, mostly in the Middle East and Africa, has led to a refugee crisis in Europe and the UK, further raising concerns that it may facilitate human trafficking.

Vaz further called for a stronger response from the government to the smugglers. There is no official figure for illegal immigrants living in the UK; however, the London School of Economics and Political Science estimates that between 417,000 and 863,000 of them currently reside in the country.



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