

# Human trafficker suspect extradited to Italy

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Eritrean-born Medhanie Yehdego Marede was extradited to Italy on Tuesday for his suspected part in a North African human smuggling ring.

Contradicting reports have created fears that authorities [may have the wrong man](#) and that the man in custody has been incorrectly identified. There are suggestions the man may be 28-year-old Marede Tesfamariam, himself a refugee.

Italian prosecutors understand that Marede, 35, whom they call “the General”, played a key role in people smuggling and allegedly

helped send [at least 13,000 people](#) to Europe. His arrest has been hailed as the most important European breakthrough against smugglers who work out of Africa.

An Italian prosecutor said Italy had seized “the boss of one of the most important criminal groups operating in Central Africa and Libya.”

The chief investigator for Italy’s national police force, Renato Cortese, alleges Marede is [one of the Mr Bigs of the industry](#).

“The suspect facing justice is a character without scruples and without any respect for human life; an individual who occupies a key role in the operational centre of a criminal network that moves millions of euros,” Mr Cortese said.

Prosecutor Maurizio Scalia said Marede is also being investigated for alleged banking fraud over the transfer of payments for smuggling. – **Joseph Walz**

*Photo of the man believed to be Marede from an Italian police handout.*

✍ June 10 | By Joseph Walz | World

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## About the author

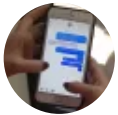
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