METRO NEWS BRIEFS: NEW JERSEY;
Man Gets 22 Months In Immigrant Smuggling

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Body

A Korean whose ship shuttled scores of illegal Chinese **immigrants** to the United States and the Bahamas was sentenced yesterday to **22 months** in prison for organizing the trips from South America.

The ship owner, Nam Jick Cho, 52, who lived in **New** York City, is likely to be freed soon, since he has been in custody since June 1997. The **smuggling** came to light in May 1997, when 23 Chinese **men** were found wandering the streets of Bay Head, south of Asbury Park, after a powerboat ferrying them to shore from Mr. Cho's ship ran aground on a foggy night.

Acknowledging Mr. Cho's cooperation with investigators, a federal judge gave him about half the maximum term and waived a fine. Mr. Cho, who operated a fishing business before he ran into financial trouble, could still face deportation, his lawyer said.

Mr. Cho said through an interpreter that he intends to work honestly and do volunteer service when freed. "I must have been out of my mind to do what I have done," he said.

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