

YOUR VOICE



London Refugee Voice



Strengthening the Voice

03rd July 2009

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LRV Meeting on the **BORDERS, IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP BILL**

London Refugee Voice is organising a membership meeting on the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Bill. The meeting will be held on 13th August 2009; 1800 hours at Horn of Africa Community Hall in Shepherd's Bush Meeting which for which the topic is the **BORDERS, IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP BILL**. Refugee Community Organisations would benefit greatly from this meeting, since most of you would have some questions about particular concerns for refugees and others granted protection status in the UK. We also feel that this meeting would provide us more insight into any possible action we could take to ensure the fair and humane treatment of those who come to seek sanctuary in this country. The invited guest speakers are from the Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA), the UK Border Agency and the Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP).

We will also be acquainted with various opportunities for improving pursuance of our voice, and in turn encouraging refugee community organisations to have the confidence to take up such crucial issues. For more information on the bill, see: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/bordersimmigrationandcitizenship>

Charity Number 1099718
Cocoon House, Market Approach,
Off Lime Grove, Shepherds Bush, W12 8EE
Tel: 02087438733, Web: www.lrv.org.uk



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Asylum seekers in makeshift Jungle camp in France seek British 'Eldorado'

For an 18-year-old Kunduz asylum seeker, in France, who fled his homeland after joining and then leaving the Taleban in Afghan, home for the past year has been a blue Tarpaulin in a makeshift camp on wasteland known as the Jungle. Every lunchtime Ehsan eats a sandwich distributed by a local charity and every evening he tries to cling on to a lorry heading for Britain. He has never made it past the port.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees wants to offer Ehsan and others like him an escape route. It is trying to encourage them to seek asylum in France and has opened an office in Calais, the only one of its kind in Europe outside the Italian island of Lampedusa.

It distributes information sheets to the Afghans, Eritreans, Sudanese and Iraqi Kurds waiting to get into Britain, explaining the benefits of taking refugee status on French soil.

According to Ehsan, "France won't offer me a visa," "It won't offer me a job. It doesn't want to help me. Why would I stay here?"

Reference: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article6626507.ece>

A Threat To The British Way Of Life

According to Frank Dobson, there is nothing new about stirring up hatred over strangers. He adds that virtually every bigoted phrase, every intolerant argument has been recycled again and again. The incomers are almost always portrayed as destitute, idle, disease-ridden and a threat to the British way of life.

Today, virtually everybody accepts that it was right for Britain to take refugees from Nazi Germany. But that wasn't the accepted view at the time. So, thousands went to their deaths because they did not qualify as refugees to Britain in the 1930s.

In any case, asylum seekers are only a minority of people coming to Britain. Many others come here to study or to work. Some intend to stay while others expect to be here for only a year or two.

And, of course, many British citizens go to study or work abroad. We all benefit from the two-way flow. Indeed, we owe some very British institutions to refugees and immigrants. The first fish and chip shop was opened by a Jewish immigrant in 1860.

<http://www.epolitix.com/mpwebsites/mppressreleases/mppressreleasedetails/newsarticle/camden-new-journal-a-threat-to-the-british-way-of-life//mps/site/frank-dobson/>



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Languages test for suspect asylum-seekers

Asylum seekers claiming to come from Palestine or Kuwait will face being tested on their own language in a bid to weed out bogus applications under changes announced by ministers today.

In a written statement to MPs, Mr Woolas said: "Language analysis carried out for some Somali asylum applicants demonstrates that significant proportions of those tested have claimed to be of a nationality, or from a region or grouping, that is not their own in order to try to gain residence in this country....."

There is also the awareness that a significant proportion of Palestinian and Kuwaiti claims also are from other nationalities.

Reference: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/languages-test-for-suspect-asylumseekers-1706172.html>

Myth-busting facts and figures about refugees and asylum seekers

Many asylum seekers who are initially refused refugee status go on to win their appeals, reflecting the poor quality of initial decision making at the Home Office. Amnesty International's February 2004 report revealed Home Office asylum decisions are based on 'inaccurate and out-of-date country information', 'unreasoned decisions about people's credibility' and 'a failure to properly consider complex torture cases'.

Reference: <http://www.naar.org.uk/resources/PDFs/ASYLUMfact%20sheet.pdf>

Refugees and Migrants enrich the British Economy

According to the Home Office, between 1999 and 2000 migrants and refugees made a net contribution of about £2.5 billion to the UK economy.

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*** London Refugee Voice is always welcoming new members. To join us for free or to renew your membership to ensure that you get your Voice heard, please go to <http://www.lrv.org.uk/join-lrv/>, or email info@lrvo.org.uk**



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