

Bulletin 19 December 2008

SDV News and events

Christmas fundraising

Remember easyfundraising whenever you shop online. Also remember easysearch when you search the internet. Both can generate funds for SDV. Find details of how to register for both on the SDV website.

<http://www.sdv.org.uk/id15.html>

Free Funds

On the "free funds" area of the easyfundraising website, there are lots of ways to raise funds for free for SDV. These include free trials with lovefilm (£8) and blockbuster (£6.25) and filling in a short survey for the chance to win a Honda civic (£3 donation). If we all did this, we could raise quite a lot of money! Go to easyfundraising using this link

<http://www.sdv.org.uk/id15.html>

Website news

Remember there is now a members only page on the SDV website. See separate email or contact Kate for details of how to access the page. The page contains SDV policies and procedures, Visitor update notes, the latest rota, expenses forms etc.

www.sdv.org.uk

Immigration, asylum and detention news

December 2008 edition of Migrants Rights News

The Migrants Rights Network is working for a rights-based approach to migration, with migrants as full partners in developing the policies and procedures which affect life in the UK. Migrants Rights News aims to inform our members and other groups working on migration issues about regional and national policy developments, campaign news, recent research and upcoming events.

At the heart of Migrants Rights News are the campaigns and strategies being developed by migrants to consolidate their position in British society. We focus on activities that extend the scope of the human, economic and social rights which apply to migrants' circumstances.

In this month's newsletter, find details of:

- (1) 2008 - a Year in Immigration...
- (2) Simplification Bill timetable delayed as Government changes tack
- (3) 'The Illegals' community play premieres in London
- (4) Review of Housing and immigration
- (5) MRN is still seeking Treasurer!
- (6) Upcoming Events

- (7) Reports and Research
- (8) Other Announcements

To read the full newsletter, please visit:

<http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/enews/2008/december.htm>

Iraqi sewed up mouth in failed bid to avoid deportation

A Kurdish asylum seeker who sewed up his mouth in an attempt to avoid being returned to Iraq last week had the stitches forcibly removed and was still put on the plane the next day, it has emerged.

He was among 49 rejected asylum seekers who were put on a special charter flight to northern Iraq last Wednesday, which took off six hours late from Stansted and was forced to return to Britain after being refused permission to land in Iraq.

The flight's take-off was delayed because two asylum seekers had to be removed from the cabin. One had smuggled a blade on board and slashed his stomach, while a second concussed himself by banging his head against the window.

They had been taken to Stansted airport from Dover and Colnbrook immigration detention centres in preparation for the midday flight in an old French charter plane. After leaving six hours late, it stopped at Bucharest for refuelling before going on to Irbil in northern Iraq. It arrived at 3am in clear and calm conditions, but made several passes before returning to Turkey because of "bad weather". The plane and its passengers arrived back at Stansted 31 hours after leaving the UK.

Michael Woolley, of the Visitors Group at Haslar immigration detention centre, Portsmouth, said one reason for the protests was the widely held belief that three men who had recently been returned to northern Iraq had all died. He also said that one deportee had been in England since 1999 and had an English partner and three children.

The fresh details about the attempt to fly the Kurds home came as the former Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith said rejected asylum seekers who were unable to return home should be allowed to work and have access to healthcare.

"The policy of making asylum seekers destitute is mean and nasty and has not worked," said Duncan Smith in a report by the Centre for Social Justice. The report estimates that at least 26,000 failed asylum seekers in the UK are surviving on Red Cross food parcels.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/dec/16/immigration-deportation-iraq>

Unsuccessful asylum applicants 'should be given support'

Asylum seekers refused permission to live in the UK but who are unable to return to their country of origin should be allowed to work and access health care, a report by former Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith's thinktank said today.

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) report, co-authored by Christian socialist and long-

time Labour party member Bob Holman, proposes setting up a new independent body to rule on asylum claims. The body will be made up of a panel of magistrates, with charities and voluntary groups contracted to provide support for immigrants until they are returned home or integrated into society if allowed to remain in the UK.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/dec/15/asylum-support-thinktank>

See also "Asylum Seekers are Part of Us"

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/dec/15/conservatives-social-justice-holman>

Other news and events

Universal declaration of human rights film series

At the Filmhouse Edinburgh

<http://www.filmhousecinema.com/seasons/universal-declaration-of-human-rights-film-series/>