

Bulletin 20 June 2008

SDV News and events

SDV Music Night – Saturday 12 July: Line-up confirmed

Make sure you put this date in your diary for our next gig. Scott McDonald and David Lawson (blues/folk) will make up the bill. There will be a (very reasonably priced!) licensed bar, make sure you let your friends and family know.

You can download posters and fliers for the event from the SDV website

www.sdv.org.uk

Immigration, asylum and detention news

Rally against Dawn Raid and Deportation of Bridget and Osaivbe O'koro: TODAY

Drumchapel Park at Helca Avenue 2.00 pm Friday 20 June Please support this rally if you can. The short notice is entirely the fault of the Home Office. Details at:

<http://scotland.indymedia.org/node/10782>

Local immigration teams to be introduced across the UK

New Local Immigration Teams are being introduced across the UK, alongside Local Crime Partnerships with police, as part of a major refocus of the work of the UK Border Agency (UKBA), Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announced today.

Around 7,500 UKBA officers and staff across the UK will be reorganised into 70-80 Local Immigration Teams and given a mission to focus on local immigration crime.

The Government's plans, set out in 'Enforcing the Deal' published yesterday, set a clear focus for the UKBA's work in Britain to target the removal from the UK of the most harmful people first. This will be achieved through a raft of measures including; automatic deportation for serious offenders, over 1,000 extra immigration staff focused on enforcement duties, action against employers who break the law and new partnerships with local authorities and enforcement agencies to shut down the privileges of the UK to those breaking the rules. Reforms set out in 'Enforcing the Deal' include:

- from today, the UK Border Agency is naming and shaming employers who hire illegal immigrants;
- from this summer the most serious business offenders will be targeted jointly by UKBA and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in a new intelligence sharing and joint targeting partnership which will come into force from July;
- employers and colleges applying for carefully policed licences to hire migrants;
- there will be a joint investment and business plan between UKBA and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA);

- automatic deportation will be introduced for those sentenced to 12 months in prison or more, and deportation will be imposed for those who use guns or sell drugs regardless of their sentence;
- watch-lists of immigration offenders will be shared with DWP, HMRC and private sector fraud prevention agency CIFAS;
- by January 2009, UKBA will have increased the number of foreign national prisoners removed to over 5,000 during 2008;
- Local Immigration Teams will be up and running in each region;
- a UKBA Criminal Investigation Division will be in place;
- 90 per cent of constabularies in England and Wales will have Immigration Crime Partnerships in place; and
- five local authority partnerships will have been deployed and evaluated.

Together these measures show how the UKBA plans to detect, detain and deport those with no right to be in the UK and to provide support to businesses and communities to ensure the country gets the migrants who will benefit UK socially and economically.

Full press release at:

<http://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/lfi/162323>

Report of an unannounced follow-up inspection of Harmondsworth IRC

Overall, this inspection recorded significant improvement in a centre that has long been of concern to us (HM Prisons Inspectorate) and the detention authorities. The build-up to reopening (following disturbances) had provided space to work with staff to change the culture and approach of the centre. However, managers were aware, and this inspection confirmed, that there was still more to do before the centre expanded to full capacity. Negative staff attitudes had been effectively challenged, but positive staff interaction was not yet the norm. Processes to support detainees' safety needed to be robust and closely managed, and activities expanded and fully used. BIA also needs to make sure that its own systems are more effective and less remote and impersonal. But it is clear from this inspection that there is now much to build on at Harmondsworth, and that the centre is travelling in the right direction.

http://inspectores.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprison/inspect_reports/irc-inspections.html/544611/Harmondsworth_2008.pdf?view=Binary

Hicham Yezza makes bail: Academic freedom detainee released from detention after 31 days.

Following the cancellation order on his deportation, and after being detained for over 30 days, Hicham Yezza has been released on bail after the Home Office refused to grant him temporary release.

Hicham, a prominent political journal editor, writer and University member was arrested under anti-terror legislation for the possession of 'radical material' on May 14th. The document in question is widely used for research purposes and was downloaded from an official US government website. At the time of the arrest the document was being used as material for a PhD proposal (supervised by staff in the Department of Politics and International Relations) of a student friend who was also

arrested.

In the wake of the arrest the Home Office attempted to deport Hicham: a move that elicited widespread condemnation. The deportation order was cancelled in the midst of protests and a concerted campaign for Hicham's release, but he remained in detention for weeks in various immigration removal centres. The Home Office attempted to justify Hicham's continued detention by claiming he had an 'absence of close ties' to the UK. This was despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, including hundreds of character references from friends and university colleagues, testifying to his excellent character and exceptional contributing to British society over the last 13 years.

Stop the Deportation of Hicham Yezza Website:

<http://freehichamyezza.wordpress.com>

Other news and events

World Development Movement Internships

WDM Scotland is recruiting for two volunteer positions to support the organisation and its campaigns at its office in Edinburgh. This is an exciting opportunity for anyone looking to develop skills and experience in the international development, global and environmental justice sector. The positions are:

1. Events and Administration Intern (2 days a week over 3 months)
2. Research Intern (2 days a week over 3 months)

Please note, these are voluntary positions based in Edinburgh. Local travel expenses will be covered by WDM. To apply for either of these positions, please email office@wdmscotland.org.uk for the appropriate job description and application form (or telephone 0131 454 3802).

Every human has rights: Stand up against poverty and injustice

Open air rally: 10.30am this saturday! 21st June Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow (Kelvingrove Street entrance)

Details at:

http://www.everyhumanhasrights.org/every-human-has-rights/campaign-blog/*/33%2B34