

Insaf

Justice*yikwahlulela*adalat*rechtvaardigheid*gerechtigkeid

Issue 81

January 2015

Leicester Civil Rights Movement consists of a spectrum of individuals who are concerned with the consequences of racial injustice in Britain. We welcome new members at our meetings which are held at The Racial Equality Centre 3rd floor 5-9 Upper Brown Street, Phoenix Yard, Leicester. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday February 24th 2015.
Ring Priya 0116 2532053 or Chris 0116 2219459



Presentation of 20 local organisations supporting ESOL. The government cut £43 million off the national ESOL budget in November 2015 with Leicester the 2nd hardest city hit. Long-standing ESOL tutors have lost their jobs along with students' access to English. The Minister of State for Skills Nick Bowles MP says student numbers were falling but that was created by the introduction of fees for asylum seekers who cannot pay with their Azure card. Having cut the classes David Cameron has said he plans to allocate £20 million on ESOL classes for Muslim women. Christians, Sikhs, Hindus and people of no faith also want to learn English. The majority of ESOL students are women. There is no evidence they support extremism.

LCRM is an entirely self-funding organisation. Membership is waged £3, unwaged £1, asylum seekers 20p and groups £25. We urge all supporters to join.

Tel Priya 0116 2531053 or Chris 2219459

Please send diary dates, notices and articles to

chrisgoodwin29@yahoo.com

Please also use this address for more copies of Insaf

In addition to a range of other measures, **the Immigration Bill 2015 which became law in December aims to make significant changes to the way in which people seeking refugee protection in the UK are supported by the Government.**

The Bill focuses on changing entitlement to support for refused asylum seekers, including families with children. Refused families, who previously remained on Section 95 support, will no longer be eligible for this, and asylum seeking children will no longer be protected under the Children Act 1989. Instead, two new forms of support will be introduced, forming a confusing patchwork of support streams and increasing the likelihood of delays in meeting essential needs. The Government has also removed the right of appeal against a Home Office decision to refuse or discontinue support from refused asylum seekers who face a genuine obstacle to leaving the UK. **These changes leave vulnerable children and their parents at increased risk of poverty and homelessness in the UK.**

The Immigration Bill removes the right of all asylum seekers to appeal against refusal of their cases except where it breaches the Human Rights Act or the Geneva Convention on Human Rights. On past experience of the Home Office winning is difficult. This usually means that removal pending their appeal would not cause serious irreversible harm or otherwise breach human rights. Someone will be deported a month after the appeal refusal and must include their grounds for challenging the decision in their appeal application.

Other aspects of the Bill include fining or imprisoning a person for working illegally confiscating their wages and doubling the fines to landlords who do not check the status of their tenants.

These changes represent a gross attack on asylum seekers and refugees. We need to keep fighting back and to support the victims. Membership of LCRM is due for renewal in January or please consider joining us we need support.

Stand up to racism and fascism: UN Anti-racism day demonstration March 19 2016

London Assemble 12 noon Central London Followed by march and rally in Trafalgar Square No to Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism & Scapegoating Migrants Yes to diversity

For info about transport Tel Chris 07963690326

Deportees tied up 'like animals'

Fri, 20/11/2015 - 17:59



Inspectors have raised concerns after finding people's arms are being tied to their waists for hours on board deportation flights. New reports published today highlight the use of "waist restraint belts", which inspectors described as "almost equivalent ... to the most extreme and very rarely used" restraint equipment in prisons.

The belts were introduced by the Home Office as part of a new training program for deportation staff, after Angolan deportee Jimmy Mubenga died at the hands of G4S guards in 2010. An [independent panel](#), which advised on the use of this new equipment, warned last year that "indiscriminate use of the restraint belt was not justifiable ethically or legally". It said ministers would have to approve its introduction and it should only be used as "an exceptional measure".

However, inspectors have found that the waist restraint belts "were now embedded in practice" and that they risked "being overused". On three flights to Nigeria and Ghana, the belts were used on ten deportees by private security guards from the Capita-subsiary Tascor. Inspectors said that "the justification for several of these uses was not explicit in the records" which they examined. On another flight, the belt was used on eight passengers, even though five of them did not resist being put on the flight. Nick Hardiwick, the chief inspectors of prisons, said in his report that "while risk factors were used to justify each case, the evidence was sometimes minimal."

'Tied up'

The reports refers to one passenger, Mr A, who was on suicide watch. He was strapped into a waist restraint belt, "although there was no clear evidence of a risk of harm to others". Corporate Watch tracked down a detainee who was on the same deportation flight as Mr A. Speaking under the condition of anonymity, he described the scene on board: "A lot of people were tied up, in like a vest on your tummy and arms. They tightened up the back so you cannot move and you have pain in your back. You cannot move your hands. They put people on that plane like animals," he said. (A commercially available waist restraint belt is pictured above.)

Inspectors are also concerned that the belts were kept on for longer than necessary. A woman was strapped into a waist restraint belt for a deportation to Pakistan until after the plane took off, "which was too long in view of the fact that she was compliant and cooperative throughout the process", inspectors said. One man, who had refused to board a flight, was strapped into a restraint belt "continuously for eight hours ... which was inappropriate", the reports say. It caused swelling to his wrists and he had to be examined by a paramedic.

The advisers who tested this belt said it was: "a custom-designed piece of restraint equipment, manufactured from manmade fibres and using plastic snap-locks and Velcro fasteners, designed to be worn around the subject's waist. Soft cuffs, with plastic snap-lock and Velcro fasteners, are attached to the belt by retractable cords."

They said that: "In the 'free' position, although still

connected to the belt, the cords are long enough to allow the subject relatively free movement of his arms and hands (for example, for eating). In the 'retracted' position, the subject's hands are pulled in to the front of the belt, where they can be further secured by a snap-lock fastened mesh." The authorities initially proposed that the belt "should be worn by all, or nearly all, detainees subject to enforced removal". However, the independent advisers said that "such indiscriminate use of the restraint belt was not justifiable ethically or legally. The belt therefore remains part of the proposed set of techniques only for use on the most disruptive and difficult detainees." However, the inspectors found that waist restraint belts were used six times on three flights to Pakistan, and that approaches to security were "unduly indiscriminate in some respects."

Belts, chains and shackles

The Home Office's use of restraints came under fire last month at an [inquest into the death of Alois Dvorzak](#). The 84 year old Canadian detainee died at hospital in handcuffs, shackled to a detention custody office by a six foot long chain. Staff justified the restraints on the grounds that he might try to escape.

Karen Abdel-Hady, who was the Home Office's director of detention operations at the time of Dvorzak's death, said that nine out ten people in immigration detention centres were taken to hospital in handcuffs. She said a new policy had since been introduced and there is now a presumption that detainees should not be restrained.

Although the Home Office insists that lessons have been learnt from Dvorzak's death, the deportation flight inspectors found that some authorisation forms for using restraints "did not indicate what specific risk factors might have existed", and lacked sufficient detail. This appears to falls short of the Home Office's own [guidance](#) on the use of these belts, which requires a senior manager to record "whether the restraint was reasonable, proportionate and necessary".

Corporate Watch spoke to one former detainee who claims he was recently restrained by guards in a device which sounds similar to the new belts. He says it blocked his airflow and caused him to pass out. He spoke anonymously, fearing reprisals from the Home Office: "The guards tried to pin me down with their legs and their knees. After some time they put a belt from under my my armpit down to my abdomen. They started tightening it and I was screaming and screaming 'This is too tight for me!' After some time I passed out – there was no air", he said. "Someone shouted that they should put me in the recovery position. I was in panic and hyperventilating. They held my head and tried to force a tablet into my mouth. I was choking and gagging for 30 minutes."

Despite passing out, the guards continued trying to deport him. "They put me in a wheelchair and moved me into the deportation van. On the way to the airport my condition deteriorated and they called an ambulance on the motorway and I went to hospital for some hours." He says he was taken to hospital in handcuffs, despite the new Home Office policy. "I was still handcuffed on the way to hospital. The handcuffs cut the bone of my wrist and I'm having pain in the scrotum and lower back from the assault", he said.