



Australian Government Retreats

Protesting asylum seekers at Woomera detention centre in Australia ended their hunger strike after the Australian government's retreat and agreement to review Afghan asylum applications in a transparent manner. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR)

is pleased that the hunger strike is over before costing further harm and loss of lives. Maryam Namazie, IFIR's Executive Director, had written to the hunger strikers calling for an end to any negative forms of protest that harm the lives and well-being of asylum seek-

ers.

The IFIR sees the Australian government's retreat, however small and limited, as an indication of the resistance and struggle of asylum seekers and their supporters. This retreat, however, only addresses one of the issues

raised by the protestors. Positive resistance must continue until all legitimate demands are met, including an end to detention, decent housing and lodging for asylum seekers, and the recognition of the right to asylum for all those fleeing political Islam.

Kofi Annan owes us an Apology

In his recent visit to Tehran, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stated he was 'astonished to see the degree of freedom of expression the people enjoy.' The UN Secretary General's remarks were made on the same day that protesting teachers were attacked and over ninety arrested under the direct orders of the Iranian president Khatami for expressing their demands for increased wages, the right to

organisation and association, and for an end to censorship.

The UN has continued to appease the Islamic regime of Iran despite its ongoing violations of civil rights, including the denial of the right to freedom of expression. Kofi Annan owes the people of Iran a sincere apology for his support of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the people's expense.

Woman Protesting Deportation Dies in Hospital

On 31 January, Fatemeh Malayeri, a woman protesting the deportation of Ali Ghafourian from Sweden to Iran died in hospital. She went into a coma three days earlier, when the Swedish police brutally assaulted demonstrators attempting to prevent Ghafourian's transfer from detention to the airport. Several protesters, who had blocked all exits from the detention centre, were injured in the assault.

Federation of Iranian Refugees - Gothenburg Office.

IFIR, outraged at her death, offers its heartfelt condolences to Malayeri's family and friends. It holds the Swedish government directly responsible for her death and condemns that government's inhuman policy of deportation to an unsafe Iran.

Malayeri started convulsing when the police announced that the protestors must leave the site and Ghafourian must be deported to Iran. The protest had been organised by the International

The IFIR - Gothenburg office has been informed that Ghafourian has not yet been deported to Iran and will continue its campaign until his deportation is overturned and he is granted refuge in Sweden.

Let Asylum Seekers go, Maryam Namazie, The Guardian, p. 2

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Let Asylum Seekers go

The below letter was published in *The Guardian* on Thursday January 31, 2002 (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4346519,00.html>)

Maryam Namazie



The Australian Labour party's call for the release of women and children from privately managed detention centres is a policy reversal which can be directly attributed to escalating opposition to the government's detention policy (Afghan children in Australia threaten suicide, January 29). But the proposal fails to offer a real solution to this human tragedy.

The reason for the despair is that innocent people fleeing war and persecution have entered "illegally", without first obtaining travel documents from their persecutors. Most of them are fleeing from Iran, Afghanistan, northern Iraq, countries where political Islam rules. Though they are political opponents, religious minorities, atheists and communists, women who have faced sexual apartheid, gays and civil, student and labour rights activists, they are persecuted once again upon arrival to "safety" - imprisoned, strip searched, isolated.

An asylum seeker in Curtin

detention centre who contacted us this week said they are called by numbers; are denied medical treatment and access to information and the press; materials mailed to them are seized; and they are held in isolation.

of detention centres, not only in Australia, but elsewhere as well. There is no justification for locking up asylum seekers. Their detention is nothing less than state-sponsored violence against victims of persecution and must not be



tolerated in the 21st century.

Clearly, the only real and lasting solution is the closure

An asylum seeker commits suicide in Germany

Mohammad Hussein Tamana, a twenty three year old Iranian asylum seeker hanged himself in the bathroom of the hostel he was living in on January 23, 2002.

Mohammad Hussein had arrived in Germany in early 2000 and applied for asylum

in Frankfurt. He was later transferred to eastern Germany and placed in a hostel. His application was rejected on December 12, 2001. Mohammad Hussein was later threatened with deportation and given twelve days notice to leave the country. In a suicide note, he gave a harrowing account of

his condition in Germany and the reasons behind his flight from Iran. The German police have held onto this note.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees - German Branch offers its sincere condolences to Mohammad Hussein's family. In the wake of this

tragedy IFIR - Germany reaffirms its pledge to continue its struggle for the right to asylum. It is only through collective and united efforts that we can push back the German government's racist and anti-asylum policies.

Visit <http://www.hambastegi.org>

for latest news, campaigns, actions

Imprisoned Teachers must be Released

The Islamic regime of Iran's security forces attacked a demonstration of tens of thousands of teachers and their supporters demanding increased wages, the right to organisation and association, and an end to censorship, among others. According to the regime's own statistics, over



ninety people were arrested in Tehran. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) condemns the attack on and arrest of teachers and protestors and demands that they and all political prisoners be released immediately. The IFIR calls on all people, labour organisations, trade unions, student unions and bodies, and human and civil rights organisations to

condemn the Islamic regime of Iran, firmly defend the teachers' struggle, and put pressure on the Islamic regime to release arrested demonstrators and political prisoners in Iran.

Protest letters can be sent to Khatami@President.Ir. Please send copies to ifir@ukonline.co.uk.

Next Issue:
Monday,
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Sample Letter Demanding Release of Imprisoned Teachers

Khatami@President.Ir

I / My organisation am / is writing to condemn the Islamic Republic of Iran for its assault on and arrest of protesting teachers and their supporters. I / My organisation fully support(s) the teachers' legitimate demands and demands(s) the release of those arrested in the recent teachers' strikes and demonstrations and all political prisoners.

Name

Organisation (if any)

Date

CC: ifir@ukonline.co.uk

German Conference Asylum After Sept. 11

The tenth annual conference of the IFIR - Germany will be held from 8-10 February 2002.

The main theme of the conference will be the right to asylum after September 11. The first day of the conference will be conducted in German and English. Government representatives, the head of the parliamentary commission on asylum and representatives of political parties and organisations, refugee agencies and pro refugee celebrities will participate in the opening day of the conference. The remaining two days will be conducted in Persian.

For further information and details of how to attend the conference please contact: +49(0)1737334270, +49(0)1732743686, or send us an email at: pramazanali@yahoo.de, Ngaedi@aol.com.

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