

FOOD GROUP NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF NNRF FOOD GROUP ISSUE 6 JULY/AUGUST 2007



Interested in playing the guitar or drums?
Want to meet new friends?
Join us at the Music Workshop
Thursday 26th July and 9th & 23rd August
from 7pm to 9pm at the Square Centre.

No Borders Camp at Gatwick

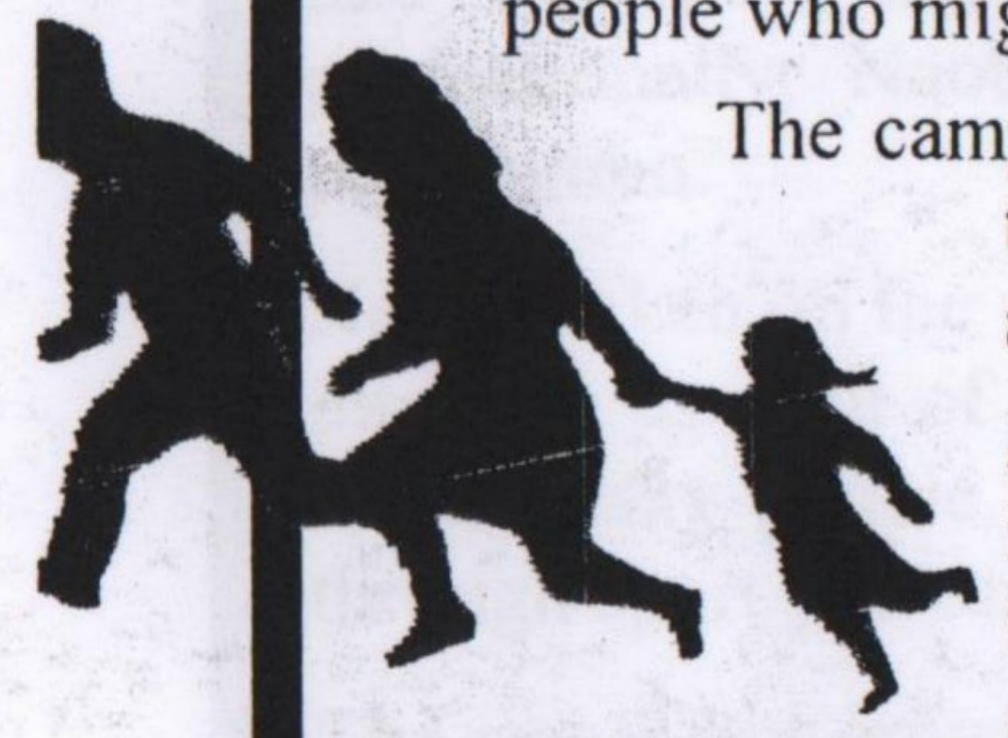
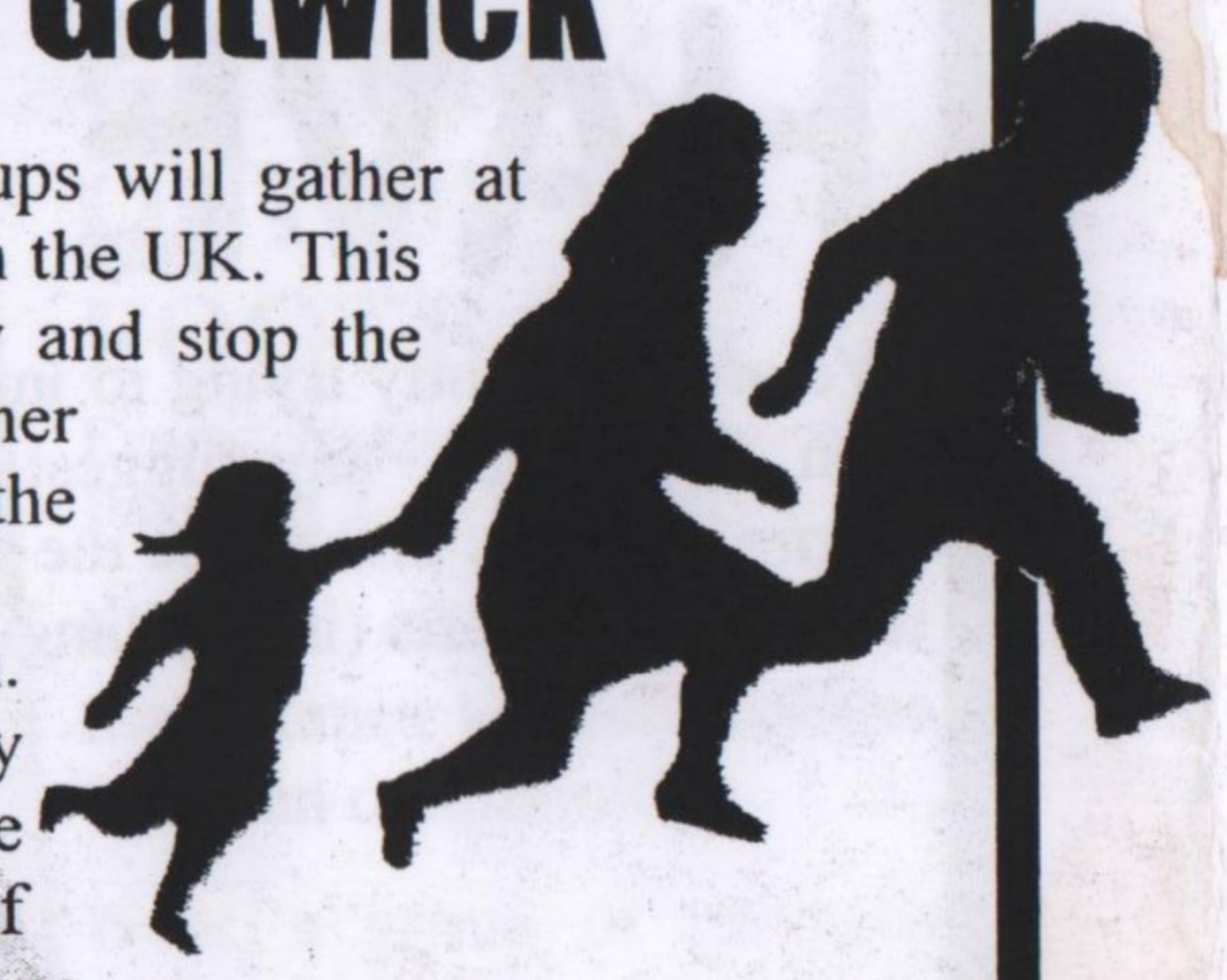
From 19th to 24th September No Borders groups will gather at Gatwick Airport for the first No Border Camp in the UK. This camp will be a chance to work together to try and stop the building of a new detention centre, and to gather ideas for how to build up the fight against the system of migration controls

Gatwick is a border in the middle of Britain. People arrive here everyday. People are forcibly deported from here everyday. It is a place where people are imprisoned for unlimited lengths of time without trial, where people are treated as criminals for the 'crime' of crossing the border.

The government has recently announced its intention to build a new detention centre, near Tinsley House, another detention centre at Gatwick airport. This will be another in a long line of barbarous prisons across the world, imprisoning people who migrate. Unless we stop it from being built.

The camp aims to challenge the building of the new centre and also to build up awareness about the issues of migration & asylum in that part of London.

Please spread the word and if anyone would like to get involved please mail us at info@nobordersnottingham.org.uk, see also <http://noborders.org.uk>.



Women's Group

Activities for Women Only take place at Refugee Forum every Friday between 10am and 2pm.

It's also an opportunity for women to meet and there will be a woman advice worker available at each session.

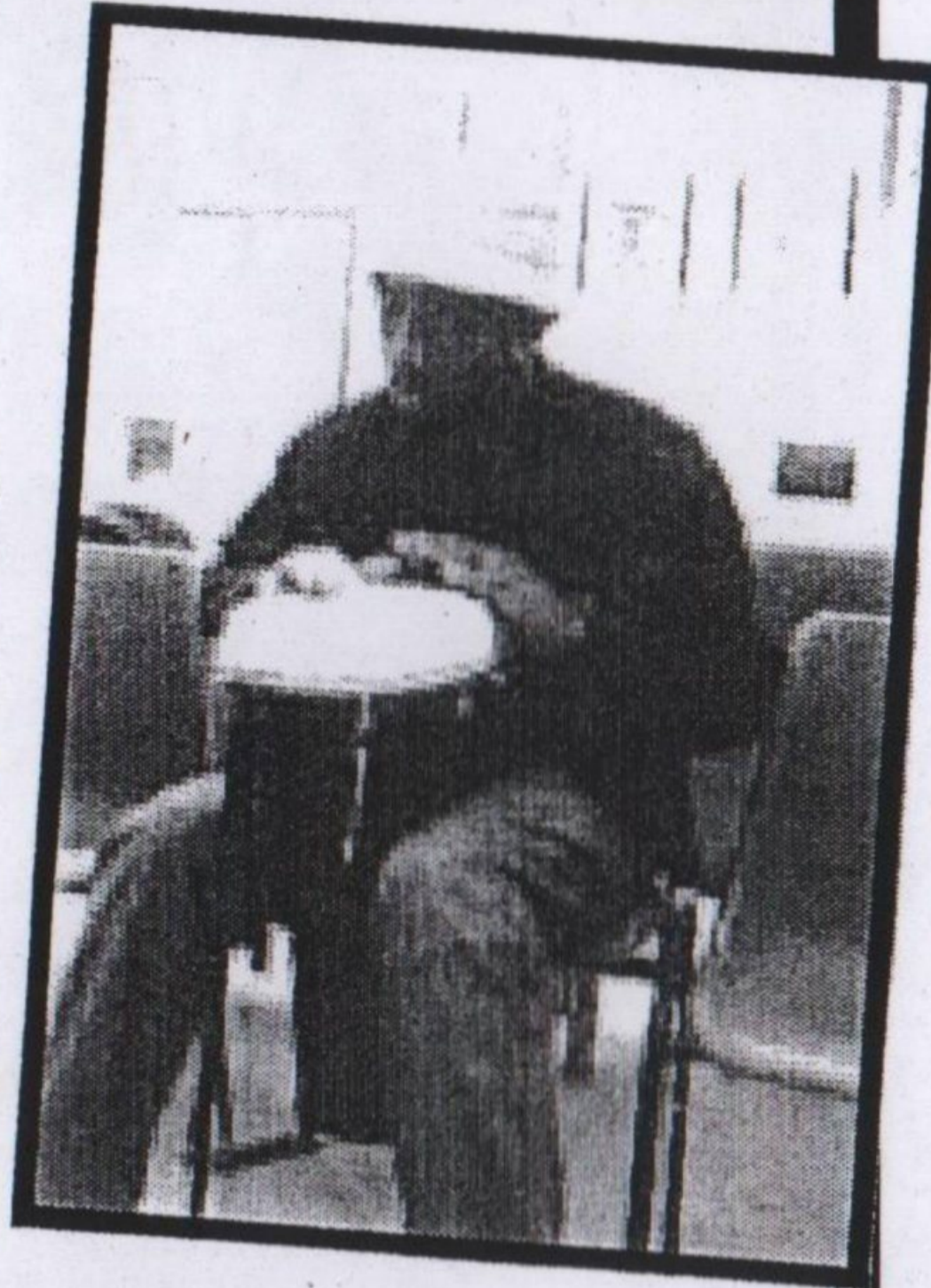
The group is setting up FREE activities, training and information sessions - more details will be available on the women's information board at Refugee Forum.

All Women Welcome



Music Workshop

Notts Refugee Forum has recently had the first of its fortnightly music workshops for asylum seekers. This was a success with six asylum seekers joining in on drums and guitar. The group was a mixture of experienced musicians and people who wanted to learn an instrument. Destitute asylum seekers got access to musical instruments. The atmosphere was very relaxed and everyone got a chance to join in.



The next workshop is on Thursday 26th July from 7pm to 9pm at the Square Centre. We urge people to get involved, either by providing instruments or coming along to the workshops. Both asylum seekers and people from the host community are most welcome.



Jacqui Smith New Home Secretary should back amnesty for illegal workers

New Home Secretary Jacqui Smith should back a plan to allow almost half a million people who are currently living illegally in the UK to stay in Britain and pay taxes, according to the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). The plan was backed by her new cabinet colleagues Alan Johnson and Harriet Harman during Labour's Deputy Leadership campaign.

IPPR's research shows that regularising the nearly half million people who currently live and work illegally in the UK could net the Treasury around £1 billion a year compared to the £4.7 billion it would cost to deport them forcibly.

IPPR argues that effective immigration controls, including deportation procedures, are crucial to a well managed migration system. But it says that deporting hundreds of thousands of irregular migrants, particularly those who have been in the UK for many years, is simply not feasible – according to a recent Home Office report, this could take over 30 years at the current rate of deportation - or desirable.

“Illegal immigration is a deeply difficult subject for politicians to tackle. But Jacqui Smith should listen to her cabinet colleagues and back a plan for regularising the nearly half million people who live and work illegally in the UK.

Nottingham Congolese Community demonstrated against continued deportations

On Saturday 30 June at 12 noon, The Nottingham Congolese Community assembled to demonstrated against continued deportations.

Starting from The Old Market Square, they marched through Nottingham, past the railway station and continued through the Meadows Queens Walk to the Meadows Park near the embankment.



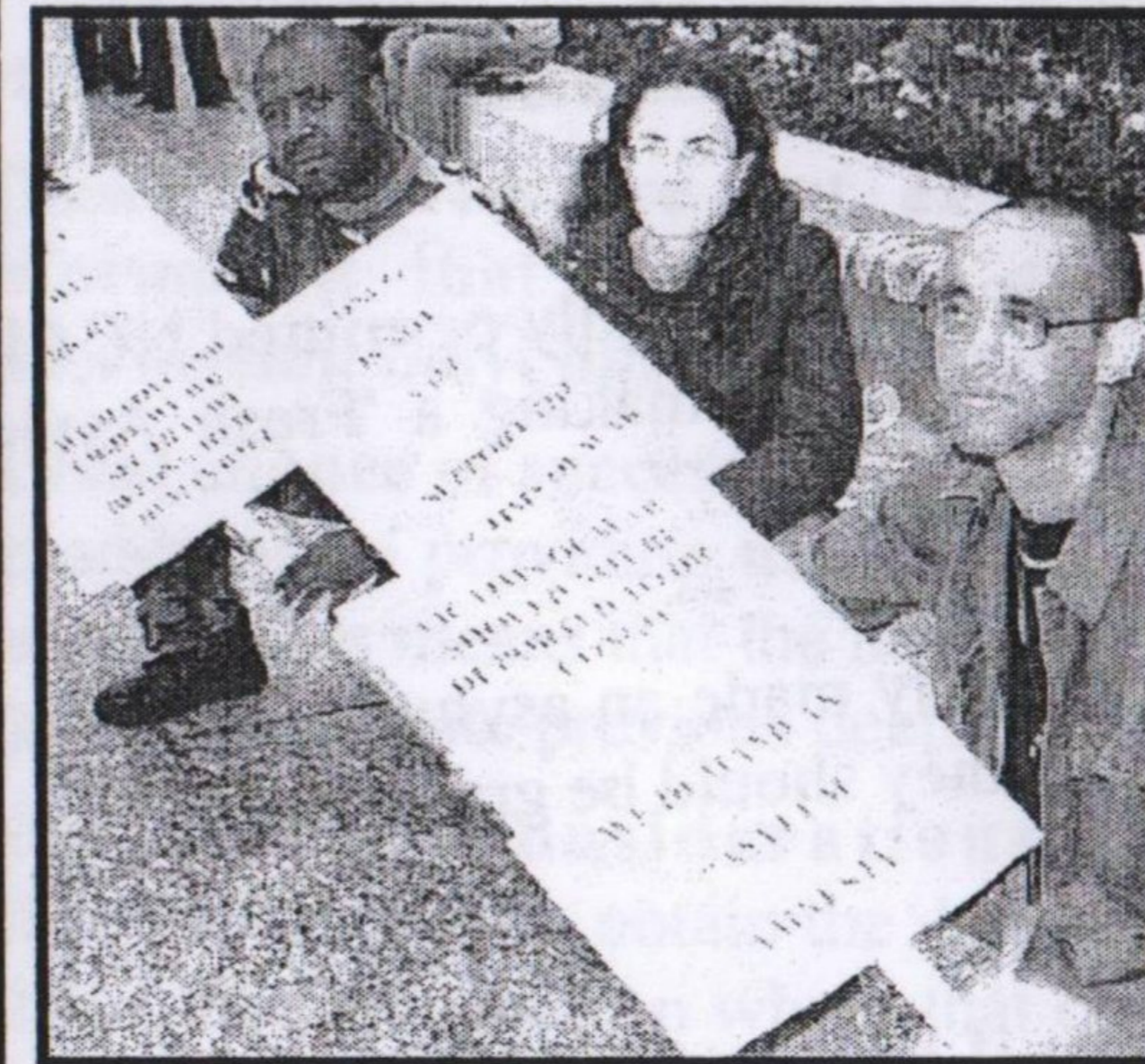
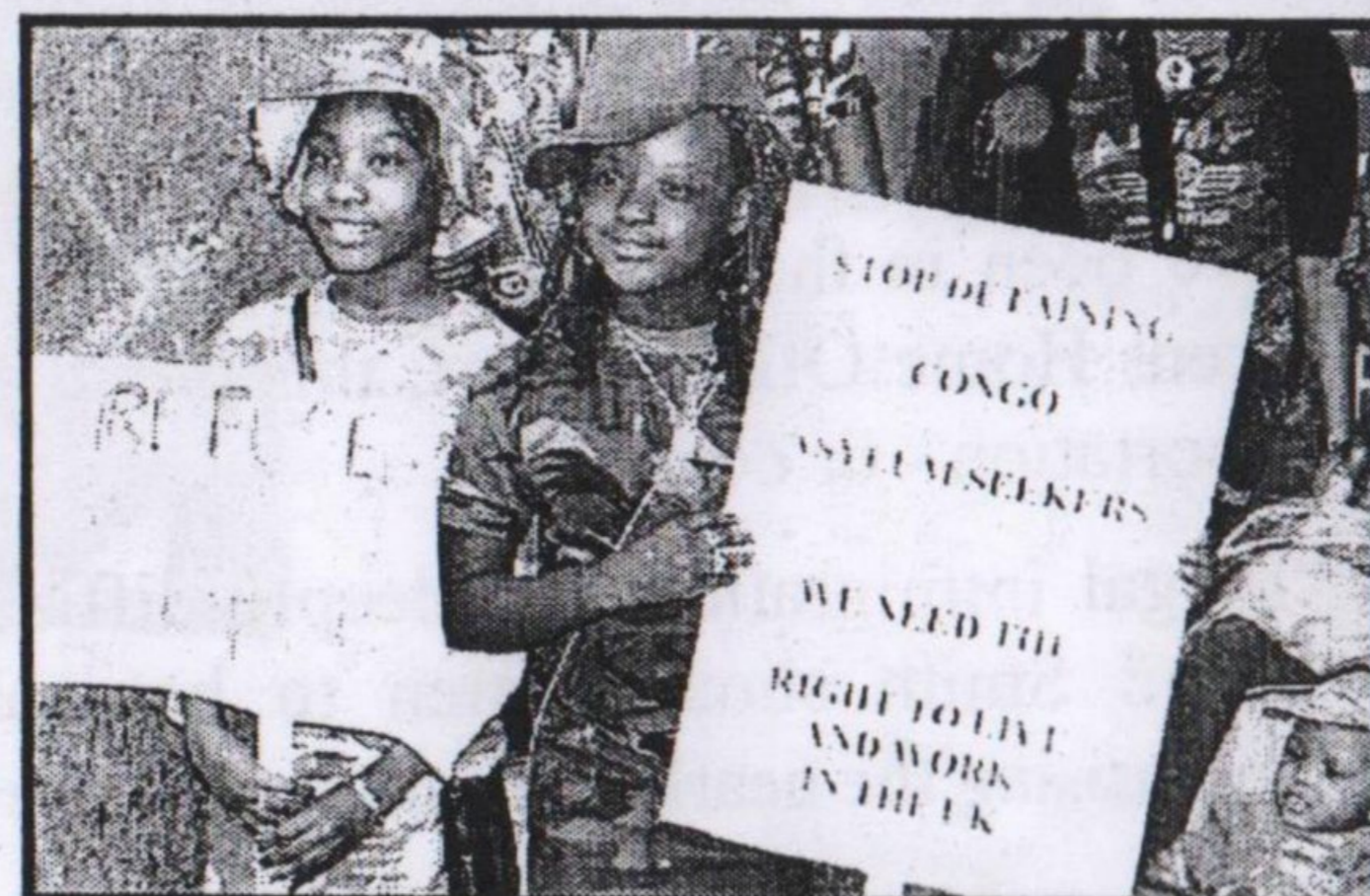
They wanted to draw attention to continued deportations of their community to the Congo, in spite of the risks to them. Is the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) really independent? Since "independence was granted to the DRC on 30

June 1960, the country has been under the control of criminals and dictators, while its progress has been hindered by foreign interference, illegal exploitation and exportation of the Congo's natural resources, and levels of repression, human rights abuses and conflict that have killed millions and produced hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons.

Despite the so-called 'democratic' elections last year, more people were gunned down in February this year in the Bas-Congo

region while protesting against local election results. Innocent men, women and children belonging to the politico-religious group Bundu dia Kongo were killed while they prayed in their church.

On 22 and 23 march, more than 700 people died in the capital when troops loyal to Joseph ' Kabila' used heavy arms in an open street battle against those backing hi's presidential contender Jean-Pierre Bemba. Hundreds more were seriously injured, thousands arrested and an unknown number were forcibly disappeared.



"The situation is dire. The treatment of failed asylum seekers is very bad - there is a very high risk of people [being] arrested when they are sent back."

Liz Atherton, Congo Support Project co-ordinator,

Continued from page 4

In the east of the country, war between opposing groups of militias is still causing death, devastation, displacement and acute insecurity. Rape is endemic throughout the country and is used as a weapon of oppression punishment and torture.

Industrial loggers are being allowed to plunder the Congo's remaining intact rainforest , upon which more than two thirds of the population depend for their livelihood. Eighty percent of the species found in the Congo cannot be found anywhere else on earth. People are being exploited for their land.

There is credible evidence of persecution of Congolese Asylum seekers who are forcibly returned to the DRC. A country Guidance tribunal due to start on July will aim to determine that it is unsafe to return people under present conditions.

The protest was organised by: Nottingham Congolese Community. Supported by: No Borders Nottingham, African Initiative Support, NCADC

Article from Notts Indymedia

Forty MPs have backed a Commons motion calling for all removals to be suspended until the court battle over removals to the DRC is concluded. John McDonnell, the Labour MP for Hayes and Harlington, whose constituency includes two immigration detention centres, warned that many people had simply disappeared when they arrived back in the DRC.

He said: "There are really heartrending cases. We have been asking the Government to at least have some process for tracking people after they are deported. The Government can have no confidence in the safety or security of people they are deporting."

Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, said the Government had a "moral obligation" not to deport people to countries that are unsafe. He said: "Jacqui Smith should part company from her predecessors and not play politics with asylum."

Your asylum claim refused/appeal rights exhausted - Making a Fresh Asylum Claim

Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) have kindly permitted NCADC to publish the briefing below, which gives a guide on making a 'Fresh Asylum Claim'.

Fresh Asylum Claims

A fresh claim is where someone who has previously made an asylum claim, which has been finally refused, makes a new claim that they should be granted asylum.

Immigration Rules

Paragraph 353 of the Immigration Rules states:

"...submissions will amount to a fresh claim if they are significantly different from the material that has previously been considered. The submissions will only be significantly different if the content:

- i) had not already been considered; and
- ii) taken together with the previously considered material, created a realistic prospect of success..."

Fresh claim or further representations

The distinction between fresh claims and further representations is very important. Further representations (or further submissions) are no more than information that is sent to the Home Office after asylum has been refused. These may or may not include new information. These may or may not relate to an identified asylum or human rights claim. Sometimes, the representations may do no more than restate any compassionate circumstances and ask the Home Office to exercise their general discretion to grant some form of status.

A fresh claim, however, must contain new information. That is information, which no decision-maker (whether the Home Office or an immigration judge) has yet considered. The effect of the new information must be that there is a real chance the claim will be successful.

Benefits of a fresh claim

If a fresh claim is made, this may enable a person to qualify again for welfare and housing support as an asylum-seeker. A person will usually have a new right of appeal against a refusal of a fresh claim. Also, a fresh claim may qualify for legal aid. In contrast, further representations will not usually lead to these benefits.

What counts as new information?

There is no limitation on what will count as new information - except that it must not have been considered before. New information might include:

- a) new information about the individual asylum-seeker - e.g. documents received from his or her home country, such as an arrest warrant
- b) new information related to the individual asylum-seeker - e.g. information from his or her home country of the arrest of a family member
- c) evidence of a change of circumstances in the asylum-seeker's home country

d) a development in caselaw - e.g. a new judgment of the Court of Appeal or decision of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal

These categories are not exhaustive. They merely indicate the range of information that may count as new. In particular, they show that new information may, but does not need to be, personal to the asylum-seeker.

A real chance of success

In addition to providing new information, a fresh claim must have a real chance of success. This means that the new information must be relevant. It must give reason to think that, despite previous decisions, the asylum-seeker is now at risk.

Necessary considerations before making a fresh claim

Firstly, it is vital to obtain the decisions made on the original (and any other) asylum claim. The evidence on which that claim was based is also needed. This information must be carefully considered to work out:

- a) what information has already been considered?
- b) what findings of fact have already been made?

Secondly, it is necessary to consider the new information. Having seen what information has already been considered, it is now possible to decide whether the information is indeed new. It will not be new unless it either provides evidence of some new fact or provides a new source of evidence for a fact that has previously been rejected.

Thirdly, it is necessary to consider whether any new information creates a real chance of success. This can only be done by considering the facts already decided. For instance, country information establishing that persons of a particular ethnic group are now at risk will not assist if it has already been decided that the asylum-seeker is not of that ethnic group - unless there is also new information giving reason to think that decision was wrong.

It will be necessary to consider why the new information has not been made available previously. Relevant questions will include:

- a) from where and from whom has the new information come?
- b) why has it been possible to obtain it now; and why was this not possible previously?

Credibility

Asylum claims are often refused because the asylum-seeker is said not to be credible (not truthful, or not reliable). If the asylum-seeker has been found to be not credible, this may affect how much weight will be given to any new information. This will depend on the source of the new information. However, if the new information contains new and relevant evidence (not simply the asylum-seeker stating that something new has happened) it would usually justify a fresh claim - unless there were strong reasons to think the evidence was clearly unreliable.

Home Office policy on fresh claims can be found at: <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/asylumpolicyinstructions/apis/>

Information provided by the National Coalition Against Deportation Campaign

FAMILY FUN DAY

Sat 18th
August

From 12pm to 6pm

At Nottingham Refugee
Forum, The Square
Centre, Alfred St North

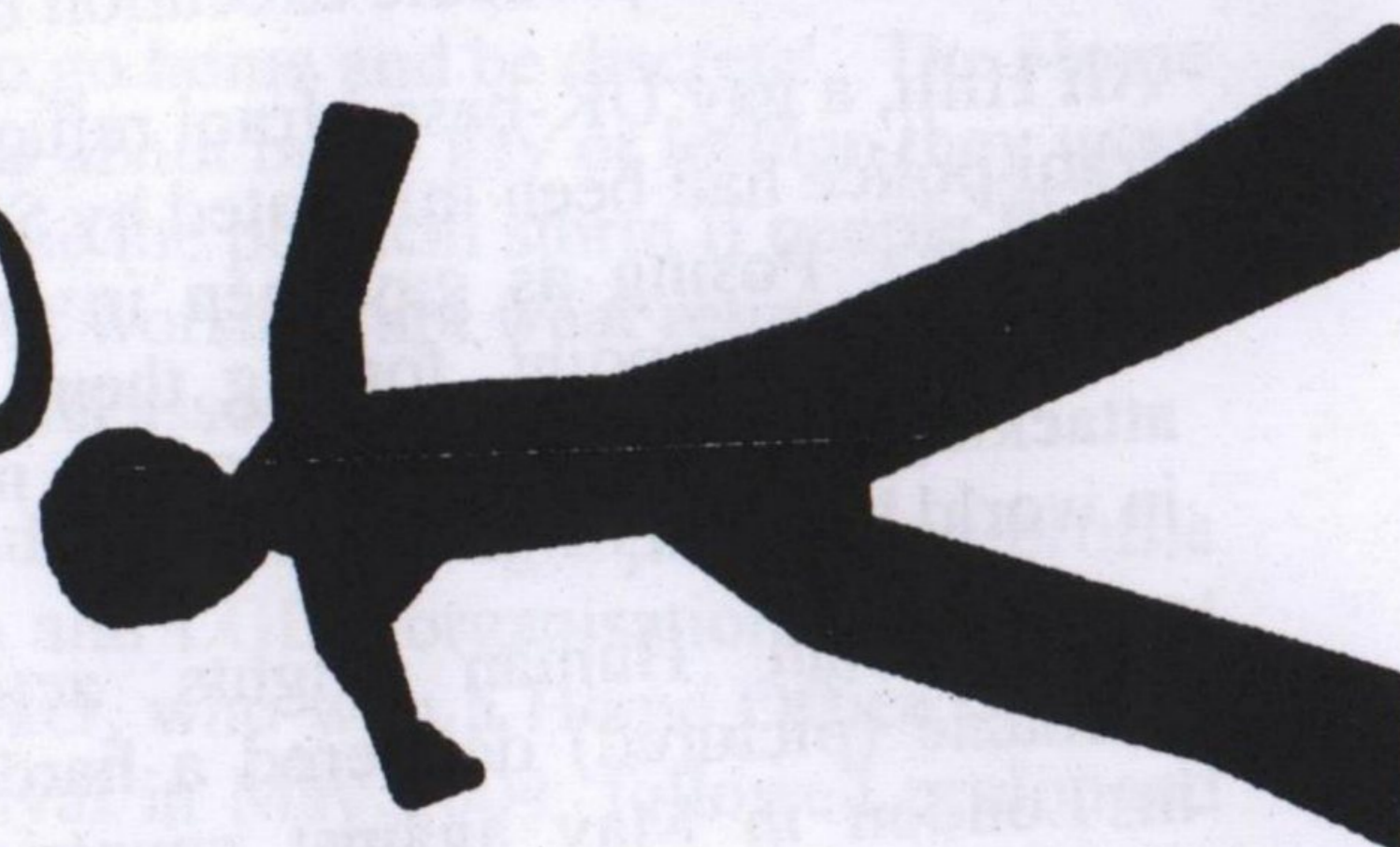
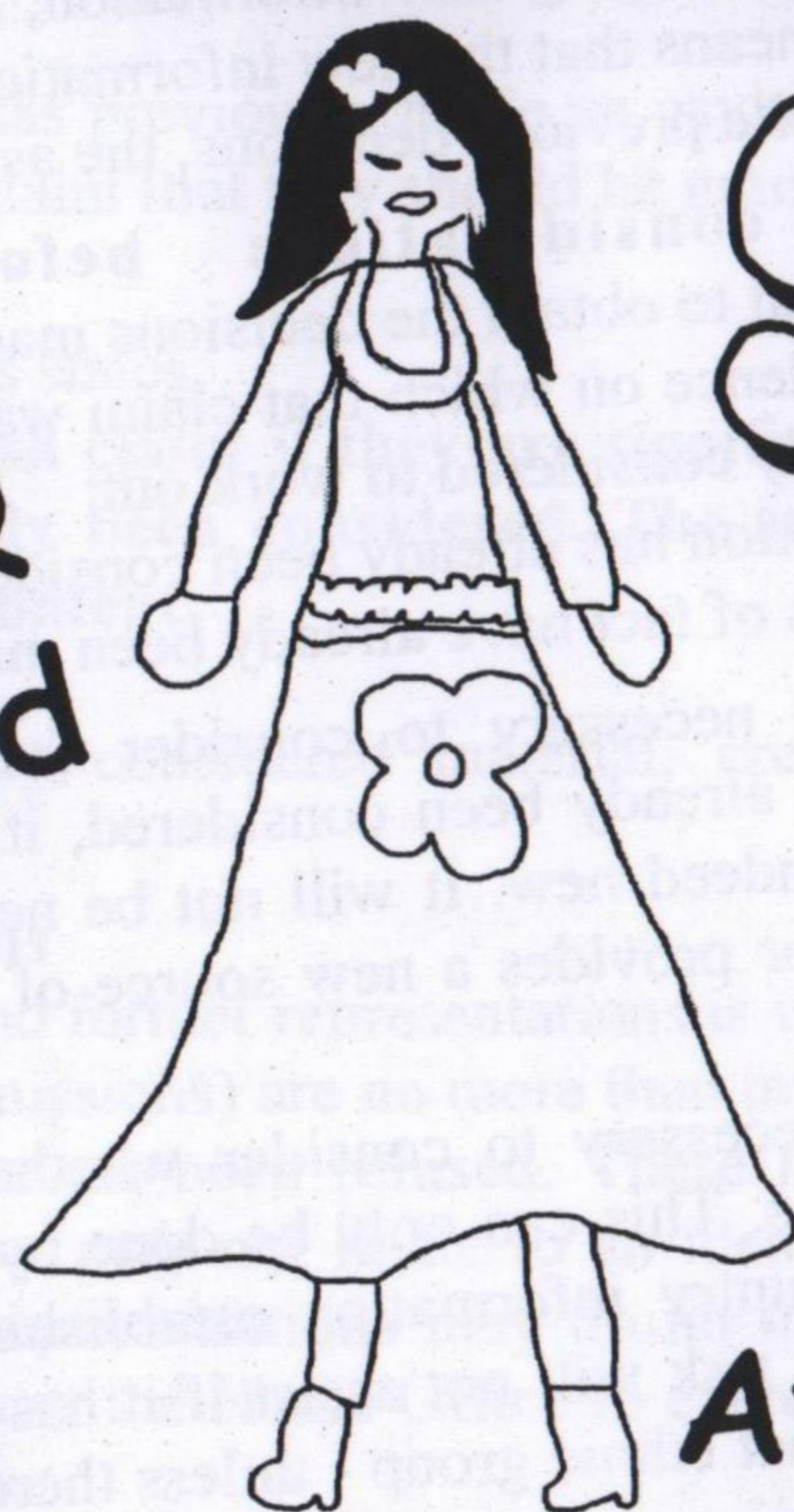
with a bouncy castle and a fancy dress competition, face painting, tom bola prizes, football, henna and make overs, loads to eat and drink (including barbequed food) and lots lots more, its going to be a real fun day for everyone at Refugee Forum on Saturday 18th August.

EVERYONE WELCOME

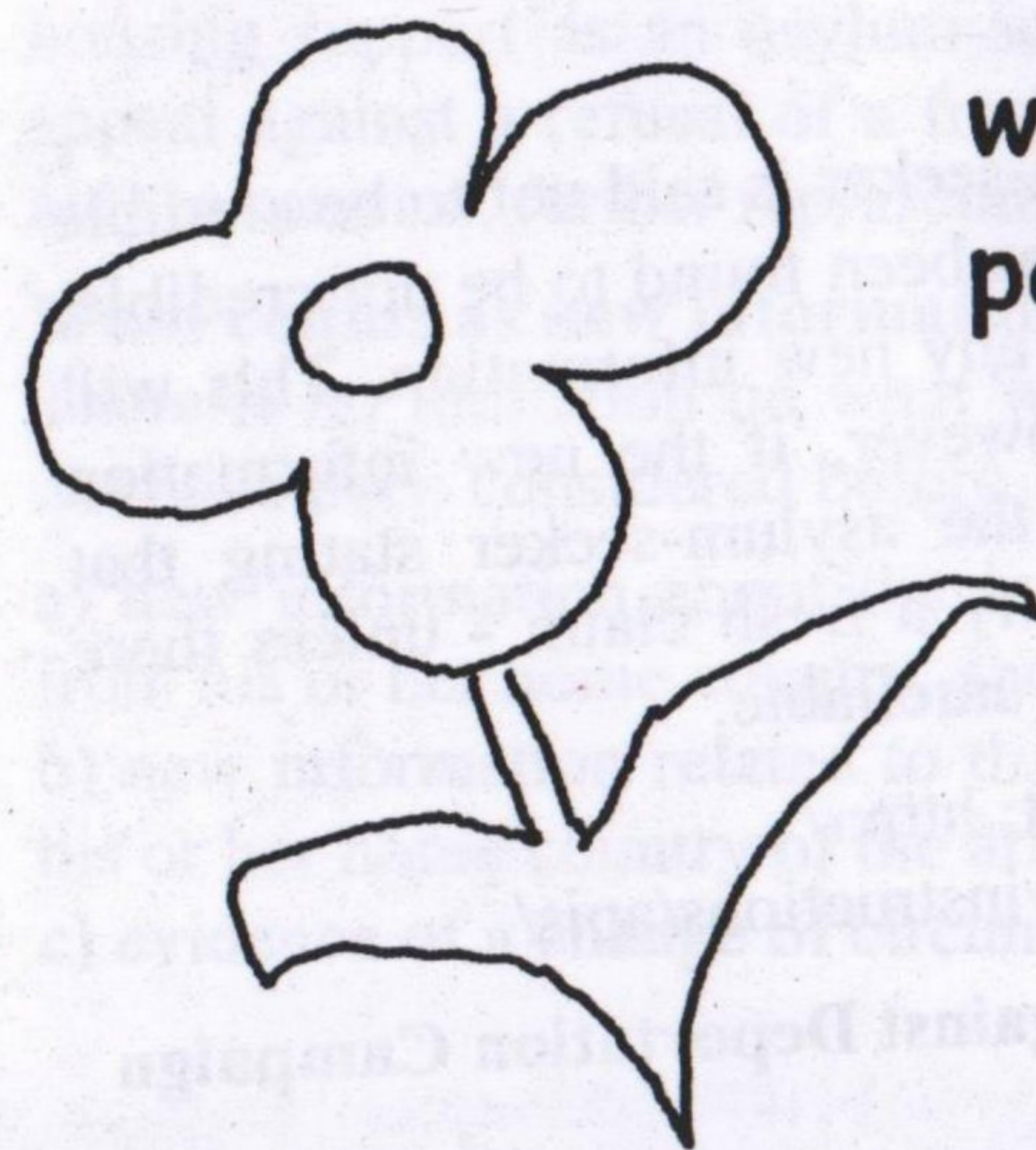
Organised by Nottingham Refugee Forum's W...



BBQ
Food



LIVE
MUSIC

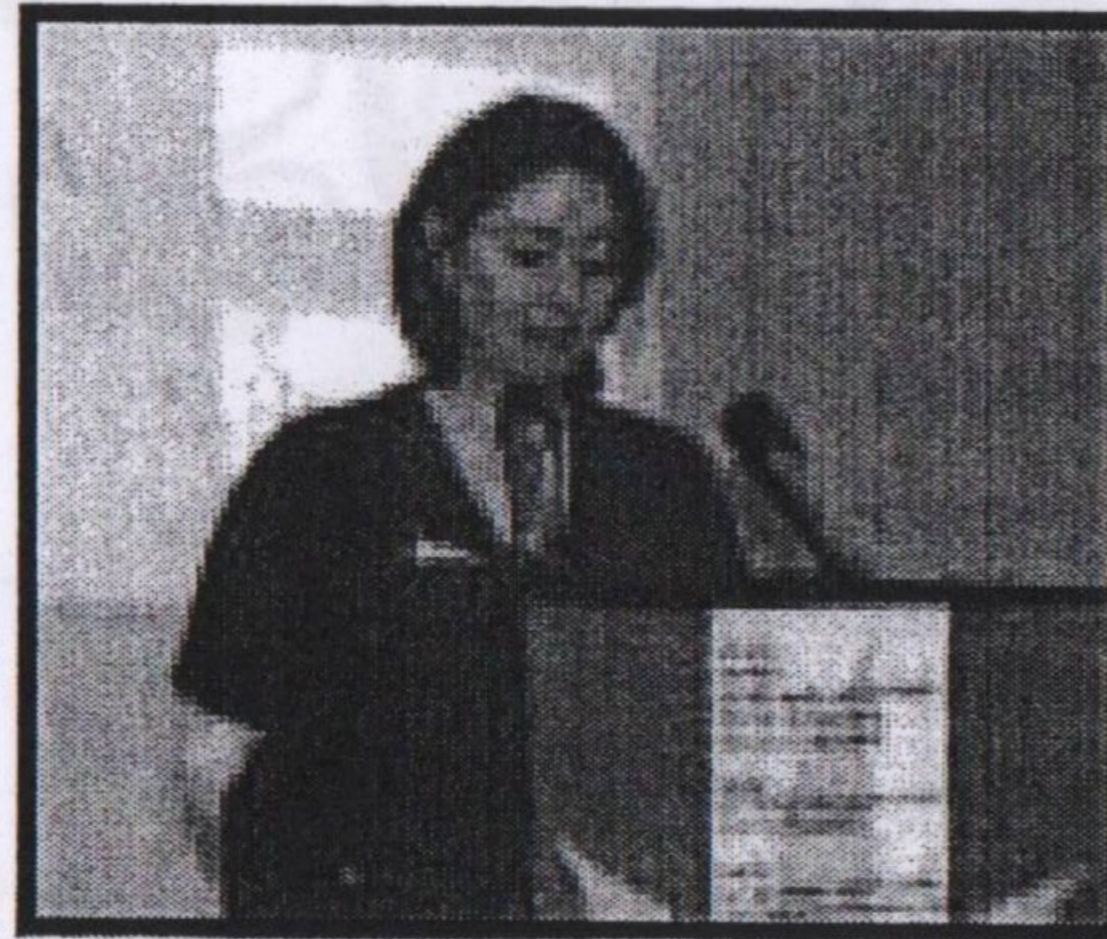


Sexual Cleansing

The World Health Organisation declassified homosexuality as a mental illness in 1990, yet it still remains a crime in Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Jordan, Afghanistan, Mauritania, Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria where same sex relationships are still punishable by death. Images of the public hangings in Iran of Mahmoud Asgari and Ayaz Marhoni in July 2005, have cast a spotlight on the particular plight of LGBT* Iranians. At least two Iranians committed suicide last year in UK detention camps, rather than face forcible return to Iran. One burned himself alive, the other shot himself. Both chose suicide rather than suffer deportation and probable execution by Iran's Ayatollahs.

Ali Hilli, a gay UK-based Iraqi refugee, coordinator of Iraqi LGBT, said recently that Iraqi police had been infiltrated by Shia extremists using police cover to kill gays and lesbians. Posing as gay men in an internet chat room, they kidnapped two gay students at gunpoint, forcing them into a desert-bound car boot, before violently attacking them. 'This is one of the most organized and systematic sexual cleansings in world history', he said.

The Iranian Human Rights activist, Maryam Namazie (pictured) delivered a hard-hitting speech in London in May against countries that impose Islamic Law. She spoke of the arrest, torture and death of two Iraqi lesbians, who ran a 'safe house' in Najaf, and whose throats were cut by Iraqi police. 'For every report that reaches the international media there are thousands of nameless, faceless individuals whose fate remains unpublicised', she added.



Last year, a 29 year old Zimbabwean, Thando Dube, was near death, following a 33-day hunger strike in a UK detention camp. Her crime? Thando was a lesbian who fled to Britain to escape the well-known persecution of LGBT people in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe.

The Home Office is so blind to anti-LGBT persecution that it says a country like Jamaica is 'safe'. It fails many gay asylum applications, despite evidence from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch that anti-gay attacks are widespread by thugs and within the police force itself.

Nothing can excuse the truly shameful abuse of all asylum seekers by the UK government. The Home Office is also failing LGBT refugees in five key areas: • No training on sexual orientation issues for asylum staff and adjudicators • No official policy supporting the right of refugees to claim asylum on the grounds of sexual orientation • No action to stamp out the abuse of LGBT refugees in UK asylum detention camps • No accurate, up-to-date information on the victimisation of LGBT people in violently homophobic countries • No adequate access to proper legal representation for LGBT asylum applicants.

The result is a frequent lack of sensitivity and understanding. There is no recognition of the fact that, in many cultures, people find it hard to talk openly about their sexuality. In some cultures, it is unacceptable to remain unmarried after a certain

age, and many LGBT people who have been forced into marriage find adjudicators in the UK using this as evidence that they can't be gay.

This is not helped by translators who are from the same homophobic culture that the asylum claimant fled; many asylum officials are uncomfortable or dismissive about sexuality issues. Some are overtly homophobic. LGBT asylum seekers are left at the mercy of other inmates in prison. Some feel unable to accept advice and support from gay campaigners because they fear having their sexuality exposed.

Almost every LGBT asylum applicant is told 'to go home and be discrete'. The Home Office claims that if a gay person is less obvious about being gay or lesbian they won't attract the attention of their persecutors. Imagine the political storm if people fleeing religious persecution were told to avoid places of worship, not wear religious symbols or keep holy books, and not celebrate any festivals associated with their religion?

But there are small victories as well: One individual's courage, plus a high-profile campaign, led by Trade Unions, student, faith and LGBT organisations, contributed to a victory for one gay Ugandan Asylum Seeker, who won a Home Office battle to remain in this country. Moses Kayiza's arrival in May 2004, followed prolonged torture whilst in Ugandan police custody. He was threatened with deportation by the UK Government, became very ill and was hospitalised. A specialist law practice took up his case. 'Let My People Stay' - gained momentum with a 10,000-signature petition, presented to Parliament. In August 06, Moses was given indefinite leave to remain.

'Mariposa' is Spanish for 'butterfly' once a term of derision for 'homosexual', now re-appropriated by us as a badge of pride. The 'Butterfly Effect' has now become a potent metaphor in the world of human rights. Just three years' ago, the first International Day Against Homophobia was born of an idea by a Frenchman and happened without money or staff and already inspired protests in over fifty countries worldwide for gay equality. The last homophobic laws could be facing the possibility of extinction in the next decade.

In the UK, we are moving from persecution, to emancipation and towards acceptance, but despite the 'fluffy' veneer of civil partnership legislation, the UK reality is that gay hate crimes increased last year, including several brutal murders. Understandably, many LGBT people still feel uncomfortable in 'coming out' and at best, remain ambiguous about their sexuality. Until we secure basic human rights for all asylum-seeking LGBT people everywhere, we in this country are not fully free. But, in the words of Victor Hugo: 'Nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come'. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender people. **Richard McCance** (Thanks to Lesbian & Gay Humanist for permission to use extracts from several articles, Brett Lock and Peter Tatchell).

Nottingham's LGBT Pride

at Arboretum Park,

(near NNRF Forum)

28th July,

12 until 6pm.

info@nottinghampride.co.uk,

gaiproject@nottinghamcity-pct-nhs.uk,

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard

(24 hours), 0207 837 7324.

llgs.org.uk

MOTHER

A face alongside my cot
Had drawn the need of close surveillance
That natural knack for raising a new-born
was indisputable.

Crawling about happy or messy
never meant getting hurt
as the very face would stick over
with a smile rather than a shout.

Caring and protective
would sing a song for my sleeping.

Often, signals on it would wish me prestige,
a beggar rather than a thief,
a decent person.

A sudden darkness split our joint living.

Indignation, sadness and tears...

No longer the face I later learnt was a WOMEN's .. a MOTHERS.

Biological or not...the HANDS on nappies.

The irreplaceable knack.

A distinct presence we all should praise

João Afonso

HELP NEEDED FOR OUR FUN DAY

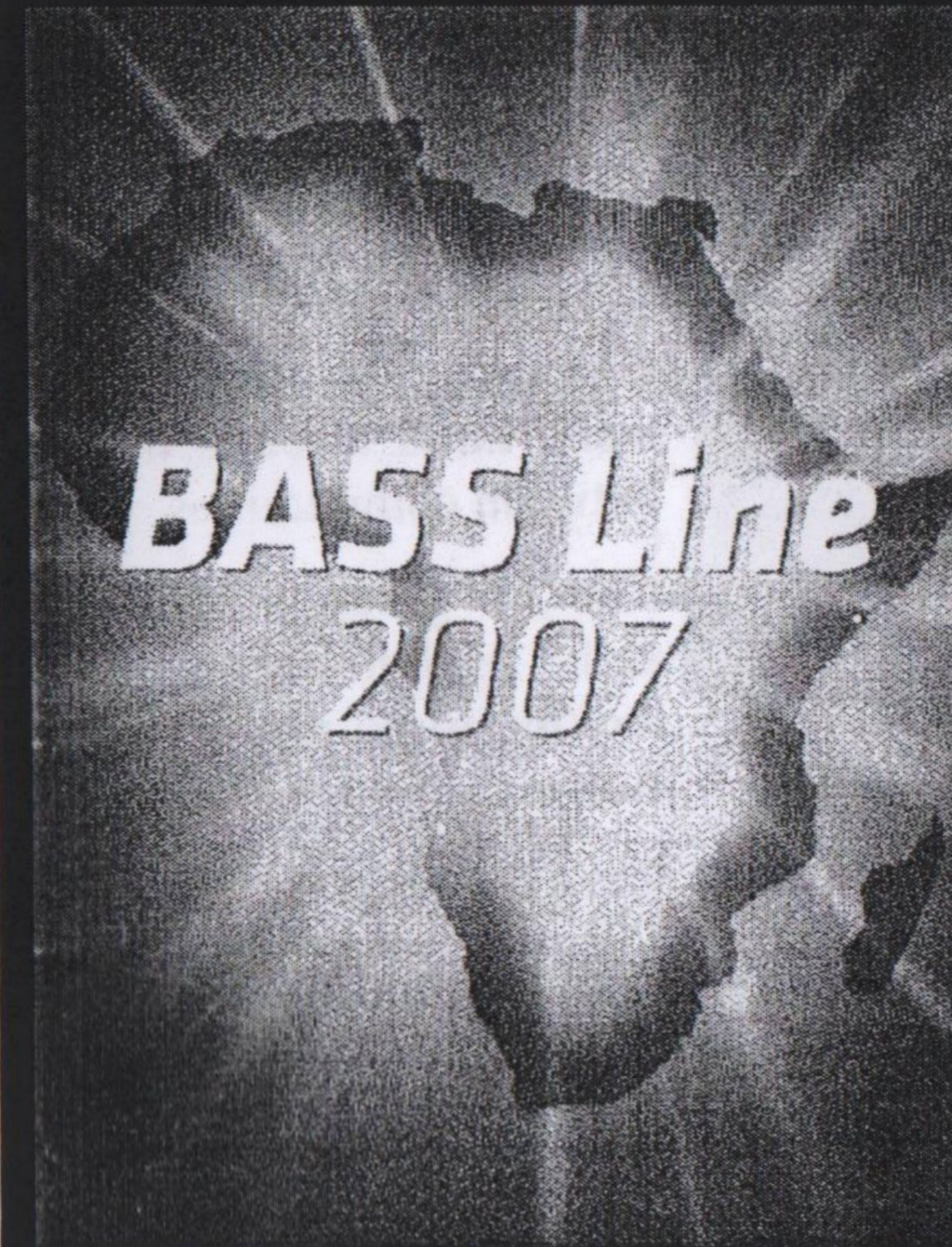


We need everyone to get involved in our Family Fun Day if it's going to be a success. We need people to staff the stalls, help with the stewarding, make the food, sing, dance, make decorations, DJ and loads of other things

So if you want to get involved in our Family Fun Day on 18th August contact Bill (from the Food Group) or Vera (from the Women's Group)



AFRICAN HEALTH & SEX SURVEY



Help change the lives of Africans in England

It only Takes 15 minutes

Do the Survey now at www.Bass-Line.org.uk or pick up a booklet at Nottingham Refugee Forum.

Completely anonymous and confidential

BASS Line 2007 – African Health and Sex Survey

More than two decades have now passed since we all heard about HIV and an estimated 39.5 million people are living with HIV worldwide. The impact and spread of HIV is crossing borders, and England is not an exception. Today, HIV has a massive impact across African populations and yet it is entirely preventable.

Your participation in this survey will be anonymous and the findings will help your local and national African organisations in England improve the way they work to reduce the spread of HIV by focusing and responding to specific sexual health needs that are important to YOU and YOUR community.

This survey has been commissioned by the National African HIV Prevention Programme (NAHIP), part of the African HIV Policy Network (AHPN) and is undertaken by Sigma Research, University of Portsmouth.

Only 15 minutes of YOUR time can change the face of HIV and sexual health. Start NOW by clicking <http://www.ahpn.org/index.php>

www.Bass-Line.org.uk

REFUGEES GET KICK OUT OF FOOTBALL

From Nottingham Evening
Post - 23 June 2007

Football has been used
many times to build bridges
between communities.

Now, a group of refugees
and asylum-seekers are
looking to do just that in St
Ann's.



So far ten men who attend the Refugee Forum in St Ann's have signed up. Some, like Nqobile Khani, a 32-year-old teacher from Zimbabwe, have played professionally. Nqobile played for Dazi United in Bulawayo before fleeing persecution.

He has taken on the role of player-manager. "This is a good way to get people to integrate as a lot of the guys just come to the forum to pick up food and don't know many people," he said. "A lot of people feel isolated and alienated so through sport you can bridge that gap."

The small, but growing squad is made up of players from across Africa, as well as Iraqis and Kurds. One young African who fled first to Germany was pushing for a professional contract there before his asylum was rejected and now hopes to kick-start his career again in the UK.

They are looking to enter a team at the Powerleague, on the Lenton Lane Industrial Estate, and develop a big enough squad to enter an 11-a-side league. The Refugee Forum has applied for funding for the team, which is also looking for sponsorship.

A 20-year-old Kenyan asylum seeker who plays for the team said: "We want to build bridges between different communities and also to give these people more confidence.

"Most of them usually stay housebound and are really depressed, so this gets them out of the house and doing something."

Anyone interested in joining the team can contact the Refugee Forum on 0115 941 5599. They practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8pm and Saturdays at 2pm.

HAVE YOUR SAY

We are constantly trying to improve the service and the quality of food we give you. If you have any suggestions / comments regarding how you think we can improve things please use the space below to let us know. We also welcome any articles or adverts (in any language) for future issues of our newsletter.

Please return any comments / articles to reception desk
or email foodgroupnews@yahoo.co.uk
Deadline for next issue 19.08.07