

Lincoln Amnesty International Groups

July Newsletter 2021

Next Meeting

There will be no mystery this time. Apologies about the last one. We will meet at 1pm on Thursday 5th August at the Arboretum Café off Monks Road.



Jessica writes

It is quite ironic that, in this time of uncertainty, we have received more spontaneous enquiries about the Alternative Christmas Market than at any time before. Usually we send out publicity well in advance and the applications for stalls come in steadily as we go. This year, without any advance publicity we have had eight enquiries about stalls if the event is to take place. This is very encouraging.

It is still uncertain whether the circumstances will favour us holding the event but we are trying to be positive. At our August meeting we will decide how we are going to proceed. We are hoping to collaborate with the Plastic Free Lincoln Group and this will also be discussed. We already have a provisional booking of the Bailgate Methodist Hall for Saturday 30 October. This will be a new venue for us and so feels exciting and slightly unnerving at the same time.

At our June meeting we met at the idyllic venue of the café in the Arboretum. In the open air, feeling safe, good service from young trainees being given opportunities of employment and very reasonable prices for drinks and good food (as sampled by Steve)

Our meetings are very informal, no minutes, a collaborative discussion and, incidentally, very few of us. More members would be very welcome. We have been going for over 30 years and our mission now is to keep the group alive. We have sadly seen other long standing groups peter out through lack of support but while there are more than two members we hope to keep going so that there is still a group for others to join.

We circulated six typewritten messages, at the meeting for members to sign, urging action to be taken by authorities to help activists who are suffering as a result of their human rights work. Some of us feel that a paper appeal is more effective than a digital appeal. We feel that a letter has more impact than an email which can be carelessly deleted and forgotten, whereas a letter landing on a desk has to be dealt with. Every letter we write to a President, or a high flying person in authority is copied and sent to the Ambassador of that country who is based in London so that there is a chance they will support the appeal we are making.

Stop the Rights Raid Week of Action



From 10-17 October Amnesty UK and others are holding a Week of Action on Human Rights in the UK. The plan is to meet with as many MPs as possible at constituency level, to show how much we care about human rights and to ask them to defend them.

This is in the context of three major pieces of proposed legislation that undermine fundamental Human Rights: the Policing Bill, the Nationality and Borders Bill, and changes to Judicial Review. To make matters worse, the Human Rights Act itself is being reviewed, which may well lead to Government attempts to weaken it before the year is out.

We are coming together with others including Liberty, the British Institute for Human Rights, and Equally Ours to tell MPs to Stop the Rights Raid.

This might be something we decide to get involved in.

Support the campaign on human rights issues in Kashmir

Tensions in Kashmir have risen since the Indian government revoked Kashmir's 'special status' in the country's Constitution in August 2019. There are extensive human rights violations by both state and non-state armed groups. These include excessive use of force and lethal weapons against protestors, killing of civilians, especially political activists, torture including the systematic blinding of young men, disappearance, arbitrary detention, sexual assault used as a war weapon, use of child soldiers, internet blockade, curbs on freedom of expression and of media, including attacks on journalists, impunity provided to the state armed forces. Meanwhile, Covid has added to the horrors faced by people in the region.

One of the pillars of this campaign is building networks and working with Kashmiri diaspora based in UK, of whom there are many. We would like you to investigate who, in your area or network of connections (individuals or organisations), might be active or interested in becoming involved. It should be noted that there will be different perspectives on the situation, so we need to tread carefully, given the longstanding tension between India and Pakistan over control in the region, with each accusing the other of HR violations and territorial incursions over the years. Many Kashmiris will be aiming for self-determination in some form, so there will be political connotations. Amnesty must focus on the HR violations without taking a political stance.

To register your support for the campaign, please contact **Cherry Bird** at AIUK.

Russian Federation Case

Please send off the letter below on behalf of two Prisoners of Conscience

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation

Igor Viktorovich Krasnov
Prosecutor General's Office
Ul. B. Dmitrovka, d. 15a
125993 Moscow GPS-3
Russian Federation

Dear Prosecutor General

I appeal to you to release Yan Sidorov and Vladislav Mordasov immediately and unconditionally in the name of justice.

They were involved in a peaceful protest when residents in the centre of Rostov-on-Don had lost their homes after a fire.

Please work to quickly release them and investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment in the prison.

Yours