



Our petition for Nadir now exceeds 60,000 signatures

Cindy Wockner
Courier Mail,
July 21, 2015



WHEN Nadir Sadiqi saw that more than 60,000 people had signed an online petition to allow him to remain in Australia rather than face deportation to his homeland and what he says is certain death he broke down in tears.

The 31-year-old Hazara asylum seeker from Afghanistan has lived in Australia for the past five years but has been told that when his bridging visa expires on August 6 he must go back to Afghanistan. He has begged Immigration Minister Peter Dutton not to send him home to the place where the Taliban murdered his father and abducted his two brothers who are believed dead.

More recently, when his personal details were publicly released in a data breach by the Immigration Department, he says he received a terrifying message on Facebook from the Taliban: We know where you are, it is obligatory for us to kill you upon your return.

Asked about Nadir's case late yesterday, a spokesman for Mr Dutton said yesterday: 'The Department is currently reconsidering Mr Sadiqi's claims.'

Nadir, who lives in Brisbane and is supported by the Buddies refugee support group in Buderim, says he is overwhelmed by the tens of thousands of people who

have signed a petition and the prominent Australians — including Thomas Keneally, Hugh McKay, Julian Burnside, Carmen Lawrence and Tim Winton — who have supported an open letter to the Immigration Minister, urging Mr Dutton to "listen and act".

"When I looked at the petition last night I just cried and I couldn't stop my tears. It was really emotional," Nadir said of seeing so much support from people he has never met. "When I saw the people holding the signs, please do not send Nadir to death, it was very emotional. I was crying. I couldn't stop my tears from dropping. At the same time I was very happy because a lot of people are trying to convince the Minister not to send me back to Afghanistan."

Terry Boyce, a member of the Buddies group and a lawyer, says that Nadir was told his application lacked credibility, and that he hadn't produced corroborative evidence of his persecution. Mr Boyce says that when he finally got some written evidence, from the village elders, that Nadir had been bashed unconscious by the Taliban, the interpreter made a mistake and translated the victim as Nadir's brother not Nadir. He then underwent an International Treaties Obligations

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ABOUT BUDDIES

The **Buddies Refugee Support Group** is a Sunshine Coast group which advocates for just and compassionate treatment of refugees, consistent with the human rights standards which Australia has developed and endorsed.

We support policies towards refugees and asylum seekers that reflect respect, decency and traditional

Australian generosity to those in need, while advancing Australia's international standing and national interests.

We are an independent community group and meet on the 4th Sunday of each month at 11am, 24 King Street Buderim.

Confidentiality

Your email address is completely confidential. The Bulletin is sent Bcc [Blind carbon copy] and no-one else sees your email address.

To contribute to Buddies

Buddies' fundraising contributes to refugee and asylum seeker support. You can direct debit to: **SUNCORP BANK**, BSB 484-799 **ACCOUNT NO:** 605927994 **ACCOUNT NAME:** BUDDIES REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

Or you can contribute to 'The Box' at our meetings and events. Your donations are much appreciated by those we help.



For your DIARY...

■ Sunday 26 July, 11am

Buddies meeting, 24 King St, Buderim
Guest speaker: Chilemwa Nkowane-Poole, solicitor and migration agent assisting Buddies

Chairperson: Kayla Szumer kaylaszumer@gmail.com
5476 8910

■ Sunday 23 August, 11am

Buddies meeting, 24 King St, Buderim



GUEST SPEAKER AT THIS SUNDAY'S BUDDIES MEETING – CHILEMWA NKOWANE-POOLE

Chilemwa Nkowane-Poole is a solicitor and registered migration agent who is handling the protection claims of several of our asylum seeker friends. She offers casework assistance, appeal assistance and advocacy to migrants and refugees applying for Australian visas.

Chilemwa is an experienced advocate in both women's rights and human rights more broadly and is the Principal of the Migrant Women's Advice Service based on the Gold Coast. Having migrated to Australia herself in 2002, Chilemwa is well versed in issues affecting the migrant community.

Come along and meet Chilemwa and learn of her work and some of the legal hurdles facing our asylum seeker friends.



■ BUDDIES STALL HOLDERS

Buddies have been invited to set up a stall at MooFest, a Mooloolah Valley music festival planned for 5 September. This could be both a fundraising and awareness-raising opportunity for any interested Buddies. If you have ideas, please contact Scott Grimmertt for the festival info pack via buddies@scottgrimmertt.id.au or call 0427 364 802.

THIS WEEK'S ATTACHMENTS



- Letter to send: Please join worldwide collaboration to address refugee crisis
- Open letter: Please save the life of Nadir Sadiqi - supported by well-known Australians

PETITION TO SIGN: STOP THE TURN BACKS!

Sarah Hanson-Young, The Greens, 16 July 2015

This is Clare with her 4 month old baby boy Gardin. She is from Cameroon and was trafficked to Libya, put into slavery and is now trying to escape after being raped and assaulted. I witnessed her being rescued alongside 414 other people from an overcrowded sinking wooden boat in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

In Europe organisations like MOAS and MSF are working to rescue people on unsafe boats and save lives, while in Australia the Abbott Government has a policy of boat turn backs and telling desperate people 'nope, nope, nope ... we will not help'.

It is an international embarrassment for Australia.

There are more refugees today than at any other time since records began. Now more than ever, Australia needs a humanitarian and compassionate response to the global refugee crisis that includes a coordinated regional solution where we work with countries in our region along with the United Nations.

People do not just disappear if they are pushed back to sea. They are simply left to die somewhere else. We need to help them.

Please sign our petition to tell the major parties that turn backs are not the answer to the refugee crisis.

WEB

<http://campaigns.greens.org.au/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1792&ea.campaign.id=40477>

Contributed by Ted Webber and Audrey Raymond

SBS DOCUMENTARY 'GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM'

Six Australians embark on a journey to see the world through the eyes of refugees, including a former refugee, two sisters with opposing opinions, a Nauru and Manus Island whistle-blower, a tough talking teacher, and a 'Stop the Boats' campaigner.

Series Three will screen on SBS at 8:30pm on Tuesday 28, Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 July





Save Nadir campaign

■ CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Now into its last two weeks, our campaign to prevent Nadir's deportation on August 6th is taking on an even greater sense of urgency. We

are still receiving excellent media coverage and our Change.org petition is heading up towards 70 000 names. Our open letter (see attachment) has been publicized and some of its signatories interviewed and quoted. A vigil held yesterday evening at St John's cathedral in Brisbane attracted many supporters.

It's now time for us all to ramp up the pressure on immigration minister Peter Dutton. Please ring his office and send him emails (peter.dutton.mp@aph.gov.au) and photos of your messages. Let's leave no stone unturned in our support of Nadir!

■ MORE ARTICLES IN THE NEWS

'If you return to Kabul your killing is required'

Frank Coletta, Daily Mail UK, 17 July 2015

WEB

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3139709/If-return-Kabul-killing-required-chilling-message-sent-Taliban-Facebook-Afghan-refugee-claims-run-hide-avoid-deportation.html>

MPs urge Govt to reconsider deportation of asylum seeker

Eleanor Hall, The World Today, 22 July 2015

WEB

<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2015/s4278616.htm>

(continued from page 1)

Assessment with the Immigration Department in January this year and has yet to receive the decision.

"He is like a dead man walking now," Mr Boyce said.

"His circumstances and those of many others are in the hands of the Government," he said, adding that Nadir needs clarity about whether he will be forced to leave on August 6 or allowed to wait for the appeal decision.

WEB

http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/national/nadir-sadiqi-begs-immigration-minister-not-to-send-him-to-his-death-sentence-in-afghanistan/story-fnihsixi-1227451372264?utm_source=change_org&utm_medium=petition



Attendees at Buddies meetings will recognise Audrey Raymond's beautifully behaved little dog Bertie. But we didn't realise he was a dedicated activist as well...

■ LAST FRIDAY'S MESSAGE FROM NADIR

It's just 20 days now. Every day I'm more scared. I remember the words of the death threat I got on Facebook and fear what will happen to me.

That 43,000 of you have signed my petition is the only hope in my life. Peter Dutton hasn't responded yet...

My friends here in Brisbane had an idea of how you could help TODAY.... can you send in a photo of yourself holding a quick sign saying 'Peter Dutton: Australians are begging you not to deport Nadir to his death'? My email address is savenadir@gmail.com

If enough people do it we can show him the amount of support out there. I love my community in Brisbane. I don't want to leave, and I certainly don't want to die and never see my children again. Please help!

■ WEDNESDAY'S MESSAGE FROM NADIR

My life is in Peter Dutton's hands. It's scary not knowing what's going on, and in 15 days possibly being deported back to face the people who killed my father.

All I've heard is a response in media that Mr Dutton is "reviewing" my case. But I'm worried they're just quietly running down the clock.

Can you help tell him Australians support me staying? Mr Dutton's office number is (02) 6277 7860. Any 30 second phone message you can leave today asking him not to deport Nadir Sadiqi will help.

My petition is at 60,000 signatures now.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. You may be my only hope.



LETTER TO SEND: PLEASE JOIN WORLDWIDE COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS THE REFUGEE CRISIS

With the numbers of refugees worldwide reaching unprecedented levels, now is the time to demand our political leaders seek out collaborative international approaches, rather than selfishly returning boats for other nations to deal with.

Attached is a letter to send to PM Abbott and Bill Shorten. Send it as is or adapt it to suit. It's better, if possible, to personalize it through making a few additions and/or changes, but if you're pressed for time, a copied letter is always better than no letter!

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<https://www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm>

<http://billshorten.com.au/contact>

Thanking you,
Margaret Landbeck and the Lobby Group



Teddy Bears Without Borders

The group has met its target and has now delivered hundreds of teddies to children in detentions centres in Australia and on Nauru. Buddies still has 19 teddies here, which we will deliver to children in the BITA

detention centre in Brisbane. Thank you to all knitters who've contributed to this fantastic project!

A message from a Buddies member who works with International Health and Medical Services on Nauru:

"Your project has been a huge success and I am sure almost every child in detention has a little friend.

"I put a teddy in each room for two new families returning. They decided to stay with friends and not at the accommodation provided as they were all a little traumatised, however, the only items they took with them were the teddies for the babies. I think that speaks for itself!!!

"Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of this amazing effort, you are to be congratulated!!!!"

Shorten confirms boat turnbacks about-face

Eliza Borrello, ABC News, 23 July 2015

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten will come up against stiff opposition at the ALP's national conference this weekend when he tries to convince his party to support turning back asylum seeker boats.

Mr Shorten confirmed he had changed his mind on the policy. "I can no longer escape the conclusion that Labor, if we form a government, needs to have all the options on the table," he said.

He said he now believed the Coalition's policy of turning back asylum seeker boats, in conjunction with resettling asylum seekers offshore, had worked.

Federal MP Andrew Giles, from Labor's left faction, confirmed the policy backflip would be fought when the ALP meets to discuss its policy platforms this weekend.

WEB

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-23/bill-shorten-faces-stiff-opposition-from-labor-left-on-turnbacks/6641350>



Not a single refugee from Manus has been resettled

Elaine Pearson, The Guardian, 20 July 2015

Two years ago, Reza Mollagholipour, a civil engineer from Iran, fled Iran after receiving threats for uncovering corruption at his company. His was the second boat to arrive on Christmas Island after the Rudd government in July 2013 reinstated a policy of mandatory offshore processing for "unauthorised maritime arrivals".

Although given legal recognition as a refugee, Mollagholipour remains stuck on Manus two years later. Not a single person has been resettled or integrated into PNG two years on, and more than 900 men are still locked in detention.

WEB

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/20/its-been-two-years-since-manus-island-re-opened-not-a-single-refugee-has-been-resettled>



A migrant mother's anguished choice

**Chris Buckley and Thomas Fuller,
The New York Times, 5 July 2015**

Jubair, 13, was accidentally left behind when his mother and siblings fled Myanmar for Malaysia. Jubair was taken into another family's home in Myanmar. The father gave him work fetching water, which he does for the equivalent of \$9 a month.

Jubair's mother had signed up for passage to Malaysia, but knew that the voyage would be treacherous; that even if she survived, the smugglers would demand ransom before letting her and her children go, and that they sometimes beat, tortured or sold into slavery those who could not pay.

Since 2012, tens of thousands of Rohingya have fled Myanmar, where they are officially considered intruders. The exodus exploded into a regional crisis in May after smugglers abandoned thousands of them at sea.

WEB

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/06/world/asia/myanmar-rohingya-refugee-crisis-malaysia.html?_r=1

Contributed by John Brinnand



A border commissioner? Pull the other one

Mungo MacCallum, Echo NetDaily, 10 July 2015

Meet the newest saviour of our fragile Utopia, Australian Border Force Commissioner, Roman Quaedvlieg.

Apart from being very hard to pronounce and harder still to spell, Supremo Quaedvlieg is more than just another jumped up Queensland copper in the manner of his ministerial master Peter Dutton. He has been anointed by a sacred mission by none other than the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott. He is not so much a sentry as a guardian, deserving and receiving God's blessings from our leader in his holy work.

WEB

<http://www.echo.net.au/2015/07/thus-spake-mungo-a-border-commissioner-pull-the-other-one>



Jimmy Barnes denounces anti-Islamic protesters who used his songs

Melissa Davey, The Guardian, 22 July 2015

Australian rock singer-songwriter and former Cold Chisel frontman Jimmy Barnes has lashed out at anti-Islamic protesters who have been using his songs as their anthems during demonstrations.

"None of these people represent me and I do not support them," Barnes wrote on his Facebook page. "I only want to say the Australia I belong to and love is a tolerant Australia. A place that is open and giving. It is a place that embraces all sorts of different people, in fact it is made stronger by the diversity of its people."

WEB

http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/jul/22/jimmy-barnes-denounces-anti-islamic-protesters-who-used-his-songs?CMP=soc_567



The young people sent back from the UK to Afghanistan

Chris Rogers and Sue Clayton, BBC News Magazine, 17 July 2015

Many unaccompanied children who have fled Afghanistan and had their asylum claim rejected in the UK are given until they are 18 before being sent back. For the past seven months the BBC has followed some of these young men.

Najib makes his way nervously through the streets of Kabul. At 20, he is alone in one of the most dangerous countries in the world. "You can see it's dangerous," he says as army helicopters fly low across the city skyline, "It is getting worse here. There are bombs and explosions everywhere." As an Afghan, you might expect Najib to be used to the Taliban violence, but the city is as strange to him as it would be to any foreigner.

WEB

http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33524193?post_id=606458581_10153473199408582

Contributed by Freddie Steen



If witnesses are being intimidated, that's a perversion of justice

Richard Ackland, The Guardian, 15 July 2015

The trial of suspects for the murder of Reza Barati in February 2014 is pending in the PNG high court.

There is evidence that a detainee who witnessed Barati's death, and is required to give evidence, is being warned off going to court with threats and intimidation. One witness claims to have been warned by local PNG security guards that he will be locked up and his life threatened if he gives evidence against the accused. The detainee has been told that the father of one of the men standing trial is a senior PNG police officer.

WEB

http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/15/if-witnesses-to-reza-baratis-death-are-being-intimidated-thats-a-perversion-of-justice?CMP=share_btn_tw

Contributed by **Diana Woolley**



Asylum seeker clocks 100 day hunger strike

Lisa Martin, Sydney Morning Herald, 16 July 2015

Doctors are warning the federal government will have blood on its hands if it doesn't evacuate a critically ill asylum seeker from Manus Island to Australia for urgent medical care. Friday marks the 100th day of Mohammad Albederee's hunger strike protesting against a lack of medical treatment for kidney and shoulder problems, after an alleged assault by guards at the detention centre last year.

WEB

<http://www.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/asylum-seeker-clocks-100-day-hunger-strike-20150716-3zds.html>



No turnbacks: Let the Vietnamese asylum seekers land

Ian Rintoul, Refugee Action Coalition Sydney, 21 July 2015

RAC has called on the Coalition government to bring the Vietnamese asylum seekers off Dampier to shore and allow them to make protection applications. "We know from past actions, the government will likely attempt to return the asylum seekers to Vietnam."

46 Vietnamese asylum seekers were intercepted and returned to Vietnam in April. Some men are reported to still be in prison, and some children are not allowed to attend school. Some of the 41 asylum seekers screened out and sent back to Sri Lanka have been found to be refugees after fleeing to other countries.

WEB

<http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/?p=4166>



We can't outsource our ethical obligations to asylum seekers

Max Chalmers, New Matilda, 21 July 2015

Long before the Senate resolved to interrogate the operations of the 'Regional Processing Centre' re-established on Nautu in 2012, the dysfunction and abuses occurring there – child sexual assaults, guards trading drugs for sexual favours, endemic self-harm and mass suicide pacts – had been made clear by leaks to the media, a disturbing trickle of information found to be based on credible testimony by the Moss review.

WEB

<https://newmatilda.com/2015/07/21/nauru-inquiry-proves-we-cant-outsource-our-ethical-obligations-asylum-seekers>

Contributed by **Freddie Steen**