

# DASSAN update 20/1/12

## In todays update

- next Dassan meeting
- Support for a man in detention who lost his family in the Java Boat Disaster
- Visiting people in detention
- Support for people on Bridging VIAs
- seeking a soccer coordinator!
- What can I do
- News update
- DASSAN 2012 - what do you think we should do?

## Next DASSAN meeting

DASSAN meetings are a chance to meet other people in the network, and to share ideas and information. DASSAN meets fortnightly on Monday nights - our first meeting for the year will be on this coming **MONDAY 23rd January from 530 to 7pm**, at Melaleuca Refugee Centre ( in Rapid Creek Business Village). All welcome - for more information contact [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com)

## Support for a man who lost his family in the Java boat disaster

Earlier this week we were approached to assist a man who currently in detention in Darwin who believes that his wife and three children drowned in the Java boat disaster in December. He has been told that if he can get a sample of his DNA to this hospital in Indonesia where the remains of people are being held they may be able to identify his children. DIAC said they were not able to help him and we put out a call for financial support for him to be able to courier his DNA sample to Indonesia. Many people made generous donations and the father has asked me to hank people and tell them that " in sharing his pain we take some of the burden for him" , and "learning of the deep humanitarianism of Australians is a good thing in this terrible time."

If you would like to assist him and his family further ( there are at least 8 family members in detention in Darwin who lost 9 of their family), he has requested that he be moved out of the detention centre into the community. Detention is a totally inappropriate place for this man and his family in this time of great distress and vulnerability. He has family members in Melbourne and has requested that he, and the rest of his family, be placed in community detention or granted a bridging visa in order to be able to mourn their loss.

Please email Minister Bowen: [minister@immi.gov.au](mailto:minister@immi.gov.au). cc Senator Trish Crossin: [senator.crossin@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.crossin@aph.gov.au) and Senator Sarah Hanson-Young : [senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au).

## Visiting people in detention

DASSAN will be holding another visitor training session soon. We have many requests for visitors from people in detention, and visiting is a way for show support. We receive overwhelmingly grateful and positive feedback from asylum seekers and providers about how important it is that people get visits from the community. As one man told us " *please tell all the people who visit someone how much importance this is. When I knew someone was coming every week and we could talk about anything, or just sit together, it made my long days more bearable. You do not know how much it means to us.*"

We will also be starting visiting at [Wickham Point Immigration Detention Centre](#) in the near future. If you are interested in visiting people in detention or would like to know more please contact [dassanvisits@gmail.com](mailto:dassanvisits@gmail.com).

St Vincent de Paul also coordinates a visitor and support program to groups of people in the Detention Centres, as well as an excursion program. Contact [volunteer.nt@svdpnt.org.au](mailto:volunteer.nt@svdpnt.org.au)

## Support for people on Bridging Visas

As you would be aware , the Government has begun moving people into the community on Bridging Visas while they wait for their refugee claims to be processed. On Bridging visas people receive some financial support ( less than centrelink) and no other support. They are able to work but not attend AMEP English classes. More information about their entitlements can be found here : <http://www.asrc.org.au/media/documents/welfare-entitlements.pdf>

Some asylum seekers have been granted these visas and are living in Darwin. For the first few weeks they get some support from Red Cross but then are on their own. Red Cross tells us that finding accommodation for these men is very difficult - not only because of lack of money, but because some of them have been in detention for a very long time and feel overwhelmed by having to live independently. Tragically one man is going to ask to be returned to detention.

Are you interested in supporting people living in the community on [bridging visas](#)? This could include having a room to rent, offering employment, visiting and social support, donations of old bikes, mobile phones, clothing etc.

For more information contact Red Cross: Sarah Kavanagh on 8924 3989 [skavanagh@redcross.org.au](mailto:skavanagh@redcross.org.au) or Kerry Barber on 8924 3990 [kbarber2@redcross.org.au](mailto:kbarber2@redcross.org.au) . For volunteer enquiries please contact Kimberly Jonsson on 8924 3988 or [kjonsson@redcross.org.au](mailto:kjonsson@redcross.org.au)

More information about their entitlements can be found here  
: <http://www.asrc.org.au/media/documents/welfare-entitlements.pdf>

## **SOC CER coordinator!**

Multicultural Youth NT have been organising **weekly soccer matches with young people in detention** and are looking for a new person to coordinate this. It is pretty simple to run - everything is set up. For more information contact Meri : [meri.mynt@gmail.com](mailto:meri.mynt@gmail.com)

## **Taking Action - what can I do?**

[Visiting people in detention](#)

[Writing letters to people in detention](#)

[Writing to politicians](#)

Gifts for people in detention - contact Fernanda at [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com)

contribute to our [website](#) - contact David at [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com)

[Get involved with DASSAN](#) - all people who support asylum seekers are welcome to join us

Help with organising a **national refugee advocate convergence** on Darwin next Easter - contact Emma for more information at [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com)

[learn more](#) about the issues

## **DASSAN 2012**

Please **let us know** what you think DASSAN should focus on for 2012 and how you would like to contribute. Email [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com) with your ideas

## **Links and News Update**

link to the latest [ChilOut newsletter](#)

### [Repellent to stop mozzies bugging detainees](#)

The Immigration Department says it will provide insect repellent to **asylum seekers** at a Darwin immigration detention facility that is prone to high levels of biting pests.

### [Evidence mounts against military over \*\*asylum\*\* shipwreck](#)

By Indonesia correspondent Matt Brown Indonesian police say there is mounting evidence military personnel were involved in arranging the boat which capsized last month, killing around 200 **asylum seekers**

### [New venue for \*\*asylum\*\* exhibition](#)

A Bridgetown restaurant will host a photographic exhibition featuring **asylum seekers** after a bureaucrat at the shire last week refused to show it because of its "political nature".

### [Border crisis call as detention centre fills fast](#)

The first group of **asylum seekers** arrived at the Wickham Point centre on the city's outskirts in early December. The Immigration Department says 420 **asylum seekers** are now being held at a new compound

### [Release 'red-flag' refugees: Daryl Melham](#)

Daryl Melham, the head of a parliamentary committee on detention, said there must be a solution other than being condemned to a life in detention for the growing number of **asylum-seekers** who have been found to be both refugees and threats to national security

### [Asylum-seekers on the run](#)

NINETEEN **asylum-seekers**, including survivors of last month's boat tragedy, were still at large yesterday after 30 tunnelled their way out of a detention centre in Indonesia on Monday

### [No 'horse trade' on Malaysia Solution](#)

TALKS aimed at resolving the impasse over processing of **asylum-seekers** look likely to fail after the opposition said it was not prepared to negotiate a deal

### [Melbourne vigil to support \*\*asylum seekers\*\*](#)

Australian Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young says refugees are waiting too long for security checks in Australi

### [Jakarta calls for release of juvenile boat crews](#)

Participants agreed that an Australian legal aid team going to Indonesia next month to gather evidence on behalf of detained juvenile **asylum-seekers** would be supported by Indonesian police and foreign ministry official

### [Greens fight smuggling sentences](#)

THE Greens will lead a push to end mandatory five-year jail terms for Indonesian fishermen charged with people smuggling after crewing boats carrying **asylum seekers** to Australia

Cheers

Justine

[dassan.org](http://dassan.org)

The DASSAN update comes out once a week. If you would like more frequent updates you can join the dassalert email list where we send out information more regularly. ( email [dassan2011@gmail.com](mailto:dassan2011@gmail.com) with ' join dassalert' in the subject line)