

## **Second attempt to remove Vahidi family Thursday 23rd December.**

In August, many people supported our campaign for the Vahidi family who were threatened with forced removal to Iran. They remained in the UK but were detained for the second time on Monday, December 20th, by the UK Border Agency and they are now in detention in Yarl's Wood detention centre with removal directions for 4pm on Thursday, December 23rd. Mohammed Vahidi, his wife Zahra and their 18 year old son Farhad were given removal directions by the UK Border Agency in August when they were living in Gorton, Manchester.

Since then, Mr Vahidi and his family have consulted solicitors in the UK about further submissions in their case and their lawyers are concerned that relevant evidence was not disclosed to the UKBA before the decision was taken to deport them. In January this year, Mrs Vahidi's brother returned to Iran after 10 years and was immediately arrested and interrogated about the whereabouts of Mr Vahidi. The Vahidis have made extensive efforts to secure legal representation in Iran but lawyers there have declined to act for them.

All factors have now been put to the UK Border Agency in fresh submissions today, 21st December 2010.

The family sought asylum in the UK in January 2007. They were afraid to return to Iran because of Mr Vahidi's unknowing involvement in the leaking of information about his place of work which had connections to the Iranian government's nuclear programme. The Manchester based human rights organisation RAPAR has been working with Mr Vahidi and his family. A spokesperson said: "All the evidence shows that this family will be in grave danger if they are returned to Iran."

An Amnesty International report says hundreds of people have been detained in Iran and victimised following the peaceful protests against the election result last year. New laws have been introduced to stop people from writing on websites and website content is being monitored by the security forces. Last year, Farhad and his older brother, Farid, who has made a separate application for asylum, were involved in a protest against the Iranian government outside the BBC. This increases the danger they face if they are deported. Farhad was formerly a pupil at Wright Robinson School, Manchester, and, until August, he was a student at Manchester College. He has played basketball for both his school and college teams.

In August, Farhad told his RAPAR caseworker: "We are afraid of returning to Iran. If we went back, we would be arrested and tortured or worse. Iran is a battlefield, innocent people are being arrested all the time. Here in the UK, all my friends use Facebook but anyone who uses Facebook in Iran is risking arrest.

"People involved in protests against the Government have been denied access to lawyers. When my father approached a lawyer in Iran to ask if he would represent us if we were deported, he refused saying that he could not take our case because my father is a fugitive from the Government." **Please do what you can to help this family stay in the UK.** Write to Home Secretary Theresa May and Immigration Minister Damian Green quoting Home Office reference number V1069256

You can fax them on 020 8760 3132 or email them [mayt@parliament.uk](mailto:mayt@parliament.uk) and [greend@parliament.uk](mailto:greend@parliament.uk) [\\_privateofficeexternal@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:_privateofficeexternal@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Please also contact your MP asking them to raise this case with the Home Secretary and the Immigration Minister. You can find contact details for your MP on [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)

Please copy any emails and replies to [admin@rapar.org.uk](mailto:admin@rapar.org.uk) and to [kath.northernstories@gmail.com](mailto:kath.northernstories@gmail.com)

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