



# DERBY AMNESTY

Amnesty International (AI) Derby and District Group Newsletter

<http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/groups/derby-and-district>

March 2015

Chair: Steffi Hahn  
Secretary: James Lam 01332 606937 @ dr\_j\_lam@hotmail.com  
Editor: Alison Simcock 01332 349405 @ alison.simcock1@btinternet.com

## Book Sale - Help Please!



**Saturday 28th March in the Guildhall Clubroom, Market Place, Derby between 10.30am and 2.30pm.**

Our annual Book Sale will take place on Saturday 28th March in the Guildhall Clubroom, Market Place, Derby between 10.30am and 2.30pm. (Help required from 9am and through until 3pm – in amounts of time you can spare.)

This is the most important event in our fund raising calendar and as usual we are dependent on gifts of second hand books (no text books thank you) and the willingness of our supporters to help on the day.

### Muscle Needed!

Unfortunately both Anne and Carol, who have done a lot of the organising and heavy lifting over the years, now have health conditions which limit their physical abilities. We have lots of regular helpers and perhaps some of you might like to play a more active role to ensure the future of the Book Sale? The group has lots of expertise but badly needs some more strong helpers! Speak to Anne if you want to find out more.

Please either complete the tear-off slip and return to Anne Feist or let her know by phone or email when you can help or if you have books to donate. D766536 or [anne.feist@outlook.com](mailto:anne.feist@outlook.com)

## General Election 2015

**Freedom, justice, equality, dignity these values matter!**

These values belong to every single one of us – and right now, they're under attack.

In the UK, politicians are threatening to scrap the Human Rights Act – a law protecting our rights and allowing us to defend them in UK courts – so they can draft their own.

Around the world, thousands of ordinary people are denied these fundamental rights. They are being tortured, executed and unfairly imprisoned by their own governments.

The next UK government must stand to defend human rights here at home – and abroad.

### What you can do

In the run-up to the UK general election on 7 May 2015, AI is calling on us to join the fight for rights.

As prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs) across the country stand for election, let them know that you stand for fairness, equality and justice everywhere. You can look online for your candidates or contact the offices of the various parties for details of their candidates.

Will you join the fight for rights? Ask your prospective candidates if they will:

- Stand up for the Human Rights Act
- Stand up to Stop Torture around the world

Please let the Group Secretary (details above) know what, if any, responses you have.



### Book Sale Reply Slip

**(Help needed between 9am and 3.00pm Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March at the Guildhall Clubroom).**

I am able to help with the Book Sale and can help between ..... and .....

I am unable to help at the Book Sale but would like to donate £.....

Name.....Address.....

Email/phone.....

Please return to Anne Feist, 3 Wilson Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 7BD by 20<sup>th</sup> March

**Or Call or email:** D766536 or [anne.feist@outlook.com](mailto:anne.feist@outlook.com)

## Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

Jerry Allen, AI country co-ordinator for Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, came to our February meeting and gave a talk on the human rights situation in those countries. He talked about the indigenous people in those regions and how they are often ignored and considered as below the caste system and therefore suffer much discrimination.



Jerry also spoke on individuals at risk such as Journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda who disappeared in 2010 in Sri Lanka, presumably taken by government

forces. Prageeth's wife and AI have campaigned for his release ever since. See the case notes below.

Jerry spoke about the widespread use of child soldiers and the impact this has had on the children themselves and their families.

### JOURNALIST 'DISAPPEARED' SINCE 2010

Sri Lankan journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda has been missing for nearly five years.

On 24 January 2010, he left work at the Lanka-e-News office but never arrived home. Amnesty believes he was subjected to enforced disappearance due to his work as a journalist and outspoken criticism of the authorities. He had declared his support for one of the main opposition candidates for the presidential elections, due to take place two days after he disappeared. Since then his wife Sandya Eknaligoda has been campaigning for truth and justice for her husband, as well as other victims of enforced disappearance in Sri Lanka. However, official investigations have been ineffective and his whereabouts are still unknown.

To take action visit [www.amnesty.org.uk/prageeth](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/prageeth)

## Derby Amnesty AGM

The Group AGM took place in February. The Officers elected for the coming year are as follows:

Chair Steffi Hahn, Vice Chair Clare Proctor, Secretary James Lam, Treasurer Greg O'Shea.

**It was reported that in 2014, thank to lots of hard work by many, the group contributed £1072 to AIUK funds.**

## For Your Diary

Please do note that our annual Flag Day will be held in central Derby on Saturday 17th October. We depend on the help of as many people as possible. Anne Feist is the contact for this event.

## More on the General Election

David Callow has a list of questions that members and supporters can put to prospective candidates for the forthcoming General Election. It is important that as many as possible raise human rights issues with all the candidates. If you would like to have a copy of these questions please contact David.

[davidgcallow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davidgcallow@yahoo.co.uk)

## Inspiring National Conference on our doorstep

The Amnesty National Conference and AGM 2015 will take place at Warwick University (Coventry) on 18th and 19th April.

All Amnesty International Members can attend and vote at the Conference. The booking deadline is on Monday 2nd March but late bookings can be accepted with small surcharge. As Coventry is fairly close it would be a good opportunity for members to attend. AGMs usually are very educative and inspiring. Contact James Lam if you are interested in attending. 01332 606937 @ [dr\\_j\\_lam@hotmail.com](mailto:dr_j_lam@hotmail.com)

## Spreading the Message

*From students to Rotarians, Group Member Dave Callow has been spreading the message to a wide range of people recently. . . .*

### Birmingham University

David, accompanied by Kerry from Wirksworth and Belper Groups, was invited to the Students Guild at University of Birmingham to participate in a 'Freedom from Torture' conference in January. They gave a workshop to mainly Human Rights students on Amnesty campaigning and strategy. Kerry previously had been at Freedom from Torture's Birmingham offices to observe how trained counsellors were dealing with the victims of trauma due to their having experienced torture in different parts of the world.

### Derby Rotary Club

In February, David was invited to speak to members of Derby Rotary Club at the Gateway centre based in Derbyshire Cricket Club ground. There were about 25 members present, and the talk was based on a general insight into the work of AI in general and AIUK in particular. The Rotarians warmly received the presentation and were very interested to learn more about the work that Amnesty undertakes.