



Edmund Rice Centre

Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

November 2018 No.4

Dear All,

Welcome to the 4th Edition of ERC Justice Updates your regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on all sorts of matters relating to social and environmental justice.

REMEMBER WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Please do send us your feedback or any information you think would be good to include in further updates.

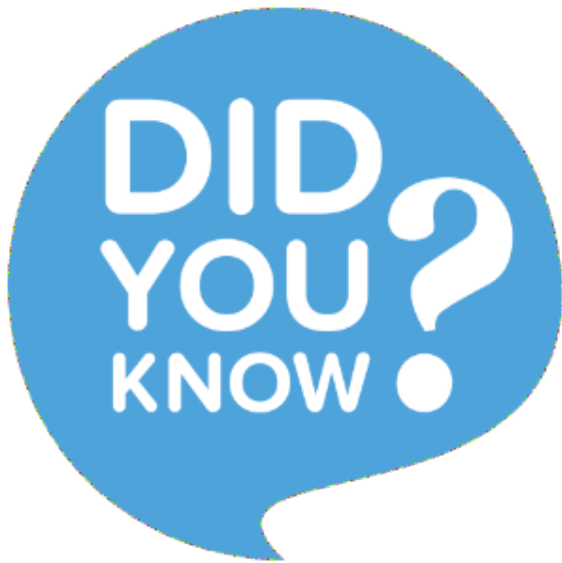
Thanks to all contributors and others here at ERC who have helped me establish the first three editions .

Don't forget to forward Justice Matters onto anyone or let me know their email address and I will subscribe them.

Regards

Marita

**Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney**



- **On Monday November 12th, the Australian government will have detained men, women & children on Nauru & Manus Island for 1934 DAYS**
 - **'There is no clear empirical basis for current policy against resettling those on Manus and Nauru in Australia'. *Shaun Hanns, (Former Dept. of Home Affairs Officer) October 2018***
 - **Detention on Nauru costs over \$400K per asylum seeker per year - ten times more than community processing in Australia**
 - **UN IPCC SR15 Report: Human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0degC of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with a likely range of 0.8degC to 1.2deg. C.**
 - **UN IPCC SR15 Report predicts with high confidence that Global warming is likely to reach 1.5deg.C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.**
 - **Foodbank provides food assistance to over 652,000 Australians every month - 27% of whom are children. (Foodbank Hunger Report 2017).**
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ANOTE TONG SPEAKING TOUR

In October The Edmund Rice Centre was honoured to host the former President of Kiribati Anote Tong. The Pacific Calling Partnership Team organised events for Mr Tong in Melbourne, Canberra & Sydney. The coordinator of the Tour, Vincent Sicari, liaised with many different organisations, the media and Federal and State politicians to make the Tour a truly effective contribution to the climate change debate in Australia.

In the many forums he attended, Mt Tong addressed Australia's responsibility to tackle the climate crisis, and his vision for a more just and sustainable future. Mr Tong expressed his disappointment with the reaction of the Australian government to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report that was released in early October stating that "the world had just 12 years to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5C.

Mr Tong has since 2007 played an important role in building awareness of the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, the leadership of front-line communities, and the urgent need for stronger action from the international community, notably Australia.

***Some Words of Wisdom* from former President of Kiribati Anote Tong**

On Hope

We must take responsibility don't give up I don't believe in 'impossible' nor should you.

On Politics & Leadership

'No matter what our politics are climate change will keep on. I have come to the

conclusion that political leaders are not the best ones to make decisions on climate change. Unfortunately, today our political leadership is focused on next election not on the next generation.

As you go forth in the world make sure you are the kind of leader that makes sure there is room for others at the table.

'Build up your bank of human values and go easy on building up your bank of cash at someone else's cost. We talk about politics as if it is a different world. It is about people. If it is not about people then it is not politics.'

'We Pacific leaders are interested in someone joining us in the fight. There is an opportunity for Australia to take leadership on the Australian stage. Let's demand the government show leadership on climate change. If it refuses to do so then vote them out.'

On Interdependence

'There will become a day when people like us (I-Kiribati) are asking to be 'brought on board'. Countries will need to decide whether to leave us in the water or take us on board.'

'Your emissions cross your borders into my space! If you in Australia can keep your emissions within your borders go on emit as much as you like but your emissions affect us in the Pacific.'

'Climate change is not about you it is about us. If nature collapses so do we. To believe a country can exist in isolation is a mistake.'

On the generosity of Fiji

'To find higher ground we have to find it beyond our borders. Fiji is a nation that is stepping forward with the greatest act of humanity I have seen in a long time, Fiji offering to take people from Kiribati and Tuvalu if it becomes necessary. They have said they will welcome the people of Tuvalu and Kiribati. Fiji is the only country that has made such an offer.'

On the Pope

'We've destroyed God's creation the Pope with his statements, actions and releasing his encyclical 'Laudato Si' made a big difference to what happened in Paris. I regard the outcome at the Paris UN conference in 2015 as a miracle.'



***Indigenous incarceration is a national tragedy
– and both left and right need to solve it***

Our criminal justice system is a costly failure and a national Closing the Gap target to reduce imprisonment rates is needed

Robert Tickner, The Guardian, October 19, 2018

Indigenous men are 14.7 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous men while Indigenous women are 21.2 times more likely to be imprisoned. It has become undeniable that the over-imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and children is a national tragedy. Too many people are damaged by criminal justice systems that do not make our communities any safer. Over the past 25 years, there has been an ongoing failure of successive governments at the federal, state and territory to take action on this issue. Despite the comprehensive report of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody more than 25 years ago, the vast majority of these recommendations have not been implemented. Despite report after report, the one consistency has been government inaction.

In that time, prison numbers around the country have continued to increase at exponential rates. This is a national crisis that demands national leadership and action.

Plea from 35 groups for action on Indigenous Australians in prison

Read more <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/sep/18/plea-from-35-groups-for-action-on-indigenous-australians-in-prison>

Last month, a large coalition of Indigenous leaders, academics and community groups like the Aboriginal Legal Services [wrote to the federal government calling for urgent action on alarming levels of Indigenous incarceration](#). The response thus far from the federal government to the open letter has, again, been deeply disappointing.

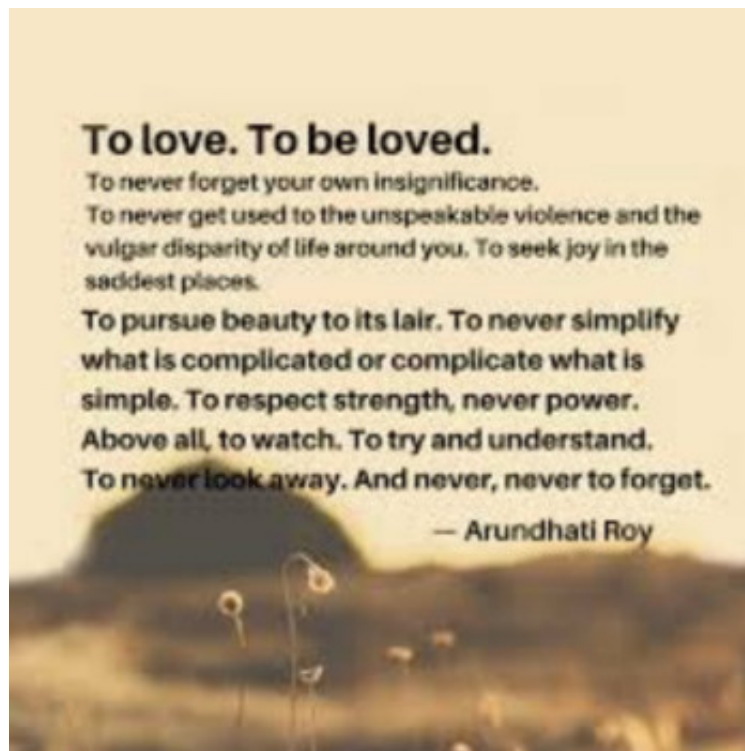
Indigenous leaders have issued a powerful call to shift government expenditure away from building more and more failing prisons and, instead, to invest in justice

reinvestment policies and programs.

Yet the response from the Indigenous affairs minister, Nigel Scullion, was that these matters are 'primarily a matter for the states that own, operate and control the justice system'. This view is clearly at odds with [the report of the Australian Law Reform Commission, Pathways to Justice](#), established by the Coalition government itself, which calls specifically for the establishment of a national justice reinvestment body and supporting justice reinvestment trials around the country. These actions lie clearly within the federal government's responsibility.....

- Robert Tickner was Australia's longest serving minister for Aboriginal Affairs and a champion of Just Reinvest NSW

Read more <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/commentisfree/2018/oct/18/indigenous-incarceration-is-a-national-tragedy-and-both-left-and-right-need-to-solve-it>



REFLECTIONS

*The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that's the essence of inhumanity. **George Bernard Shaw***

*Mercy is more than charity: it not only bestows benefits but receives us anew, and pardons again and again even the most ungrateful. **The Practical Sayings of Catherine McAuley. p.5***

When every day seems the same, it is because we have stopped noticing the good

things that appear in our lives. Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist, 1988

“Everywhere I looked, hope existed - but only as some kind of green shoot in the midst of struggle. It was a theological concept, not a spiritual practice. Hope, I began to realize, was not a state of life. It was at best a gift of life.” Joan Chittister

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair but manifestations of strength and resolution.

Kahlil Gibran,



Leila Sultani, a Hazara asylum seeker. Credit: NICOLE CURBY

Outside the immigration detention centre in Kalideres, West Jakarta, 400 or so asylum seekers are living on the street, tightly wedged between a dirt footpath and the heavy passing traffic. Families mark out the space they now call home, crowded on thin rubber mats. Tropical sun beats down through listless days. Meals are infrequent, the exhaust fumes are thick.

The makeshift camp has been here, with fluctuating numbers of people, since November last year. Some have been assessed by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and declared refugees. “The first month or two we complained every day,” says Dawood, a Sudanese man seeking asylum with his wife and four kids. “But it’s become normal. Yes, we’re always hungry and thirsty, but we’ve gotten used to it. We know everyone here.”

“We don’t have any other options,” says Jemilla, 28, as her two-year-old daughter climbs around in her lap. Jemilla came to Indonesia from Afghanistan in

February with her husband and child. Their money has already run out and with no rights to work, no hope of resettlement and few services available, they say they want to be incarcerated in the Kalideres detention centre.

In Indonesia, detention was initially seen as a deterrent, a punitive measure intended to shut down the route through to Australia. Until 2014, most asylum seekers ended up in detention after being intercepted trying to cross to Australia by boat. But in recent years, very few boats have been leaving Indonesia. With nowhere else to go, asylum seekers have been voluntarily surrendering themselves to detention in growing numbers.

Jemilla and the others sleeping rough in Kalideres would like to do the same, but after the Australian government cut its funding to the Indonesian office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) earlier this year, detention is no longer an option. On March 15, IOM Indonesia closed its doors to new cases. In fact, this year, more than 1600 asylum seekers, some assessed as refugees, have been released from detention in Indonesia, and there are plans to have the remaining 250 out by the end of December. Already, there are almost 14,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the country, but the UNHCR reports that it only has enough funding to support 400 of the most vulnerable.

Since 2001, Australia has effectively financed the detention of asylum seekers in Indonesia by providing some \$388 million to IOM Indonesia for duties, including the maintenance of detention centres and the provision of care to detainees. But Mark Getchell, IOM Indonesia's outgoing chief of mission, says the decision to cut funding makes sense in the broader context of Australia's shifting refugee strategy. Read more.....

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/10/27/asylum-seekers-homeless-indonesia/15405588007061>

PROFILE ISSUE

Climate Change in Bangladesh

Overview

Bangladesh is a tropical country located at Indian subcontinent with an area of around 1,47,500 sq km. With her flat and low-lying landscape, Bangladesh is one of the largest deltas on earth. Climate of Bangladesh is characterised by heavy seasonal rainfall, high temperatures, and high humidity. Due to her geo-climatic situation, high population density, poverty and lack of institutional setup, Bangladesh is one of the vulnerable countries in the world for global warming and climate change effect.

Climate Change Effects in Bangladesh

Global warming and climate change is the root cause of sea level rise, increased irregular flood, saline water disinfection among others. Bangladesh is significantly affected due to these abnormal natural implications. The consequences what Bangladesh is facing can broadly be grouped as follows:

- 1. Impact on Agriculture and Food security**
- 2. Impact on Health and human habitat**
- 3. Impact on Ecosystem**
- 4. Impact on water resources**

1. Impact on Agriculture and Food security

Agriculture and in effect Food security are in threat by climate change induced increased temperature, heavy flood, drought and land salinity. It result reduction in crop yield, permanent damage of fertile land, decreased fishery among others.

2. Impact on Health and Human habitat

Gradual sea level rise, heavy flood and others by climate change is forcing human beings out of their habitat. Again, post-flood situation helps spreading waterborne epidemics where children and young people are the main victims.

3. Impact on Ecosystem

Sea level rise, increased salinity and changing of chemical composition in natural substances is causing imbalance to existing ecosystem and biodiversity.

4. Impact on Water Resources

Heavy irregular flood caused by Climate change left huge amount of siltation each year which cause destruction of river navigation, aquatic creature habitat and others.

Some Facts

- Bangladesh Ranked as 5th most vulnerable country in the world due to climate change
- 32 species of fish disappear in Hakaluki haor
- Kutubdia, a small island near Chittagong has halved in size in last 20 years due to erosion and sea water rise
- Bangladesh will likely to loose 11% of her land by 2050 due to sea level rise
- The 2017 irregular flood in Sylhet division damaged 0.5 mn ton of crops, 1276 ton of fish and 4000 ducks

Women and Girls are most vulnerable groups for Climate Change

One of the harmful consequences of climate change is salt contamination in drinking water. Due to this, a recent report shows that high rate of physical complicity occurred to pregnant women living in coastal region. Again, climate change causes heavy flood, river

erosion and habitat destruction which left thousands of people homeless each year. Coupled with existing gender inequality issue in Bangladesh, women and girls face the most sufferings while migrating in search for a new shelter. A significant number of girls' educations are stopped and many of them are sent to urban areas as housemaid. Again, some of them fall into grip of human trafficker in middle of their desperate migration process.

Rahat Rubaiyat Islam is a trained Project Management Professional having around seven years of overseas work experiences in Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency sectors among others.

Rahat Rubaiyat Islam has a bachelor degree in civil engineering with advance project management certification. Now he is volunteering in Pacific Calling Partnership at Edmund Rice Centre.

ERC FILM SCREENING

Title: 'Disaster Capitalism'

Date: Wednesday 14th November 2018

Time: 6pm for 6.30pm start

Venue: Edmund Rice Centre, 15 Henley Road, Homebush West. 2minutes from Flemington Station.

Cost: Suggested donation of \$10 (to pay for cost of showing film).

RSVP: Phone ERC on 8762 4200 by 7th November.

Disaster Capitalism is a recent, groundbreaking documentary film about Bougainville, Haiti and Afghanistan, directed by Australian journalist and writer, Antony Loewenstein. Antony unfortunately cannot be with us, but Phil Glendenning, Director ERC and frequent visitor to Afghanistan will speak, and moderate discussion. Audience participation very welcome.



**In the end we must
remember that no
amount of rules or
their enforcement
will defeat those
who struggle with
justice on their side.**

Nelson Mandela

We KnowIt.com

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

Our mailing address is:

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