

Inquiry into the use of Immigration Detention

Introduction

1. My name is Bamidele. I was detained between May 2010 and March 2011, when I was released. I overstayed my visa, and claimed asylum. When I claimed asylum I gave them all my stories, but Home Office called them fabricated.
2. I was moved around between five detention centres in UK during the time I was detained by the Home Office: first I was in Lindhome in Doncaster, then I was transferred to Harmondsworth in London, then Colnbrook Immigration removal centre, then Dover Immigration Removal Centre, then I came out through Brook House, in March 2011 after ten months in detention.

Experiences in Detention

3. My experience in detention was very nasty, very horrible and very alarming to me. I witnessed a lot of ugly incidences. I got sick during the time I was detained, shortly I was arrested and detained I was diagnosed with Uncontrolled high blood pressure by Cardiac Consultant , I didn't have it before I went to detention, but I developed it in detention due to stress, panic and difficulties I went through because of the way I was maltreated during my arrest.
4. The home office refused to take me to hospital for medical treatment between November 2010 and March 2011 they were refusing to take me to hospital. During this time I was in serious neck and chest pains that arose of the uncontrolled high blood pressure. Whenever Home Officials agreed to take me to Hospitals for tests I will be handcuffed throughout my consultations with medical experts, they handcuffed me to the bed in the Hospital ward, most members of the public that seeing me tied to the bed will be asking me what the nature of my offence was before I was treated in such manner, some took my pictures with their phones.
5. There was a time I was admitted for more than 36 hours on ward in North West London Hospital when I was chained to the bed to avoid being escaped. I also experience this ugly treatment when I was having a consultation with the medical professionals in their consultation room and accident and emergency ward, I was tied to the bed in the like a dog. I was treated like a prisoner it was a very bad experience I

was very terrified. I don't wish my enemies to experience what I went through when I was detained, because of the nasty treatment that was being given to immigrants in detention. Home Office treated other people in the same way I was treated. I was not the only that had such experience in detention.

6. All the detention centres have Doctors but were taking instructions from their employers. They are just quacks, they manipulated facts and figures about detained immigrants' medical conditions, and they favoured their employers by writing false medical report to deport immigrants out of United Kingdom They make their doctors lie and say that you are fine while you are not.
7. Detention Doctors' usually co-operated with Home Office to administer lots of harmful medication to vulnerable souls being detained and this medication has adverse effects on the lives of vulnerable souls.
8. There were some detainees that develop serious medical conditions like diabetes, leukaemia and Mental health related issues, shortly after they were detained two or three months. They should have been released immediately, but they still detain them for longer period of time. Some detainees had, high blood pressure, sickle cell anaemia, terminal illness, but still they detain them.
9. There were some detainees with history of narcotics, they smuggled drugs into detention, I don't know how they get them inside the detention centres, but they were misusing it. The misuse of illicit drugs like (marijuana, cocaine and others) is very rampant and you need to witness this to see how detention centres are breeding centre for mental illness in United Kingdom. They were using the drugs to get to sleep at night but later it causes them to misbehave and ended up in 'block cell' meant for notorious criminals. It's a very unhealthy environment and appalling, some detainees would take this drugs for years, and by the time they come out they are already addicted and their lives will never remained same again.
10. Home Office need to look after people they have detained, they are in their care they are responsible for their up keep and whatever that happens to them after they might have got released into the community.

Longer-term impacts of Detention

11. There was a lot of maltreatment. People were being treated like an animal, like you are not even a human being. There were lots of degrading incidents. It's not something that an ordinary person can relate to. At times it makes me sick when I recollect what I went through when I was detained.
12. I always get upset whenever I discovered that Home Office is still detaining innocent migrants that fled their country because of one problem or the other and eventually got imprisoned falsely and disappointed where they have high expectation.
13. Lots of people lives have been damaged and suffered irreparable loss – after indefinite years in detention, after got released are half-dead, this means by the that life will never remained the same. Detention damages a lot of lives, and people's health.
14. It is only left for the detainees to look for voluntary organisations that may likely be of assistant to be re integrated back into community, this voluntary organisation has done wonderful things in the life of average people released from detention in United Kingdom.
15. Detention has made me to be traumatised and has made negative impact on my life while I was detained and after. My life has not been the same, before I was arrested and detained for ten months I was not taking any medication and presently on four anti hypertensive medication and one anti depressant to continue with my daily activities.
16. Also my family was displaced; I lost contact with my wife that almost causes separation in my wife. I frequently visit hospitals and GP's which wasn't the case before I was detained.
17. I always entertained fear each time I have opportunity to walk pass detention area or reporting centres.

Recommendations

18. I hope something can be done about indiscriminate detention - it makes immigrants feel embarrassed, unsafe and damages health conditions. Those who have mental problems are still held in detention, it is really ridiculous that they are kept there despite being so ill.

19. The inquiry panel should try to look at the indefinite detention of individuals – there is need to be a stipulated time frame for anyone to be detention only if is desired or its out right cancellation because of its' unwarranted nature.
20. Detainees are prevented to access services such as legal advice and pastoral services even when it is obvious they will only bring legal practitioner that will only discourage that his/ her case lacks merit, the only advise that is given is to 'return back to your country of origin'.
21. In case of pastoral support this is very limited as Home Office will not want outsiders to hear your version of story so that they will not be able to sympathise with you or take side.
22. Frankly speaking there is not appropriate mechanism to deal with mental, physical and emotional issues I have experienced after my detention, because there is nothing like follow up and monitoring after release from detention, other than reporting to Home Office weekly or monthly to reporting centres. This reporting is only done for access, if there is need to re detained, for deportation only.