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Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Visa provisions for Ukrainian nationals

Given the volatile situation in Ukraine, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Immigration Minister Scott Morrison have announced visa provisions to allow Ukrainian nationals in Australia to temporarily remain while their nation is under threat.

Ukrainian nationals who are currently in Australia on a visa due to expire and who may be affected by the unrest in the Ukraine will be able to approach the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to make an application and receive an extension of their visa for a temporary period. Subsequent applications may also be made if the situation of unrest in the Ukraine is further deemed by the government at that time to warrant a further extension.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/sm/2014/sm212307.htm>

Immigration privacy breach

The Privacy Commissioner and the Immigration Department have launched investigations into how details of thousands of asylum seekers in Australia were inadvertently made accessible online. The breach could potentially see asylum seekers who were previously ineligible for refugee status have their claims validated. Refugee lawyer David Manne said the law was “crystal clear that identification of a person seeking protection can result in them being granted protection on that basis itself”.

“It’s a fundamental principle of refugee law that a person seeking asylum should be free to make their claim free of disclosure of their identity to the authorities in their home country,” he said. He described the revelation as one of the most “grave and dangerous breaches of privacy in Australian history”. Guardian Australia reported on Wednesday the personal details of a third of asylum seekers held in Australia – making up about 10,000 people – had been revealed on the Immigration Department’s website. Privacy Commissioner Tony Pilgrim said on Wednesday that he had spoken to Immigration and had “been assured” the information was “no longer publicly available”. Describing the breach as a “serious incident”, he said he would investigate how it occurred. He hoped Immigration would provide a detailed report. Mr Morrison welcomed Mr Pilgrim’s investigation and said Immigration Department secretary Martin Bowles had also asked KPMG to review how the breach occurred. Refugee Council of Australia president Phil Gendenning said the release of information was “outrageous” and unprecedented. He said the breach ran the risk of exposing people who were already vulnerable to “very serious danger”.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/immigration-privacy-breach-outrageous-asylum-seeker-details-published-online-20140219-3314f.html>

Complementary protection immigration laws

The importance of complementary protection was highlighted, when the High Court issued an injunction preventing the Immigration Minister from returning a 65-year-old Hazara asylum seeker from Afghanistan. The court held that the Refugee Review Tribunal had not properly considered his complementary protection claims, and there was sufficient evidence to suggest that if he were deported without proper consideration of his claim, he could be killed (as a number of other asylum seekers removed by Australia had been).

The case is important for two reasons. First, it shows why the government’s proposals before Parliament to repeal our complementary protection provisions are worrying. The High Court found that previous decision makers had made a mistake in their application of the law. Yet, if this had been a purely discretionary decision by the minister, then a court wouldn’t have had the power to review it. In other words, the man would have been deported and possibly exposed to death or other very serious human rights violations in Afghanistan. Secondly, the case shows what a system of checks and balances is all about. As in other areas of the law, it is important to ensure that decisions can be checked for error – especially when the outcome might be a matter of life and death. The problem with the government’s desire to return to a wholly complementary protection claim in the first place. Complementary protection implements Australia’s international obligations in a clear and systematic way, and provides for checks and balances. It brings us into step with what other democratic countries do, like the 28 countries of the European Union, as well as Canada, New Zealand, the US, Hong Kong and Mexico. And it does not lead to an opening of the floodgates: last year, only 57 of 1200 protection visas granted onshore were for reasons of complementary protection.

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/scrapping-complementary-protection-immigration-laws-a-backward-step-20140214-32nz2.html>

Churches warn Scott Morrison

The biggest church denominations in Australia have warned Immigration Scott Morrison against amending a core migration act that could give him unparalleled power to “play God” and deport asylum seekers. At the Senate Committee hearing representatives from 16 denominations, which form the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce, say if the changes ahead it could be the “next Royal Commission”.

Under the current Complementary Protection visas asylum seekers who are not deemed refugees are able to claim protection if they face death or serious human rights violations, including torture. Now, under proposed changes, Mr Morrison will have discretionary power to determine the fate of these asylum seekers. Only five years ago then Labor Immigration minister Chris Evans likened the responsibility to “playing God”, saying he has too much power and the workload was too immense. As a result, the act was change 18 months ago. In a speech to the House of Representatives, Mr Morrison said the bill was not backing away from providing protection for people with “genuine” need. He argued the current bill had been “adding another product to the people smugglers’ trade and allowing advantage to be taken of our nation’s generosity”.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights concluded that the government’s proposed changes not only risked violating Australia’s non-refoulement obligations, but also contravened other rights under international law, such as the right to an effective remedy, the right to a fair hearing and the right not to be arbitrarily detained, said Professor Jane McAdam, director of Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the UNSW. In one of 30 submissions to the hearing, the UNHCR said it was concerned about the proposed changes as they weaken procedural fairness to those in need to protection.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/churches-warn-scott-morrison-against-playing-god-with-asylum-seekers-lives-20140214-32o0j.html>

Visa Processing Time Service Standards

Processing time service standards for different types of visa application are linked to the Portfolio Budget Statements. DIBP states it aims to process 75 per cent of cases within these service standards, however actual processing times may vary depending on a range of factors. The service standards:

- Are indicative only. Processing time on individual cases may vary depending on individual circumstances and the complexity of each case, as well as by location, reflecting the differing circumstance so national and regional case loads.
- Apply from date application is received by the department, including transfers from a service delivery partner and service delivery partner and state and territory office. Example: Processing time for an application lodged with a service delivery partner will commence once transferred to and received by the department.
- Apply to visa applications lodged with complete documentation. Missing documentation will result in a longer processing time for applications.
- Do not include the time taken to process nominations and/or sponsorship applications
- Processing times for online applications may also vary

<http://www.immi.gov.au/about/charters/client-services-charter/standards/2.1.htm>

Visa puts out welcome mat

A recent report from Credit Suisse said Chinese buyers were spending \$5.4 billion a year on Australian properties, with the split relatively even between new settlers and others. In recent months, the Department of Immigration has ramped up approvals of cashed-up foreign buyers wanting to secure Australian real-estate. There have been 120 applicants approved since the Significant Investor Visa scheme was introduced in November 2012. More than 100 of those occurred in the past three months. Faced with huge demand from foreign buyers Canada has taken a different route. In February, the Canadian government cut its Federal Immigration Investor Program after it came under fire for granting citizenship to wealthy foreigners without producing the expected economic benefits.

The Foreign Investment Review Board has released figures showing China is the biggest foreign investors in property with approved investment up 42 percent on the previous year.

http://newsstore.fairfax.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac;jsessionid=E575A2226C63C4EF9558CC203690882E?sy=af&pb=all_ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=1month&so=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=10&rm=200&sp=brs&cls=695&clsPage=1&docID=SMH140308GB6QQ7EU6D0

Cancellation of Student Visas

The ***Ministerial Direction No 61*** provides guidelines for considering cancellation of student visas for non-compliance with student visa condition 8202 (or for the review of such cancellation decisions) and for considering revocation of automatic cancellation of student visas (or for the review of decisions not to revoke such cancellations).

Part A of the Direction deals with guidelines for considering cancellation of student visas for non-compliance with student visa condition 8202, or for the review of such cancellation decisions.

Part B of the Direction deals with guidelines for considering revocation of automatic cancellation of student visas, or for the review of decisions not to revoke such cancellations. This Direction replaces Direction No 38 which was revoked by IMMI 13/160 with effect on and from 22/03/2014.

Migration Institute Australia – Issue 2014.30-24 March 2014

Clarification: 457 English test period completed within 3 years

The MIA has received clarification from the Department on the period specified for paragraph 457.223 (4)(eb), changes in Legislative Instrument *Migration Regulations 1994 [F2014L00327] IMMI 14/009 – Tests, Scores, Period, Level of Salary and Exemptions to the English Language Requirement for Subclass 457 (temporary Work (Skilled)) Visas*.

The period of three years was specified for paragraph 457.223 (4)(eb) from the period of visa application and for subparagraph 2.72 (10)(g)(iv) the period of three years from the date of nomination. The Department confirms the test must have been conducted within three years from the date of the relevant visa or nomination application (before or after), i.e. no earlier than three years before the date of application. If not provided with the applicant a test may be requested to be completed after the date of application and before decision.

Migration Institute Australia – Issue 2014.30-24 March 2014

Cuts to immigration red tape

The Immigration and Border Protection portfolio is contributing to Government efforts to cut red tape. The government is committed to easing the regulatory burden on the business and not-for-profit sectors. The Immigration and Border Protection portfolio is making around 1000 regulatory changes. The red tape reductions in the Immigration and Border Protection portfolio include streamlining the process for business that use the APEC Business Travel Card by reducing costs and helping facilitate small businesses travelling to APEC economies.

This will improve access to the APEC Business Travel Card by removing the requirement for certification through an approved body for Australian citizen applicants. "Further, migration agents will benefit from the government's red tape repeal measures with the removal of the English language proficiency requirement for re-registering migration agents." Minister Cash said student visa holders are also better off under this government thanks to the extension of streamlined student visa processing to more non-university providers.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/mc/2014/mc212711.htm>

Significant investor visa programme

The Federal Coalition government announced a review will be undertaken to reboot the significant investor visa (SIV) programme. "We recognise there are significant implementation issues that are currently holding up the progress of this programme and want to get this review underway to send a clear message that Australia is open for business on this visa," Minister Cash said. The internal review will be conducted in close consultation with the financial services industry and stakeholders.

"There will be particular emphasis on examining a way of enhancing greater flexibility and investment choices to significant investor visa applicants, as well as faster processing of applications for this visa. The review will also examine the possibility of introducing a new permanent visa stream for investment migrants," Minister Cash said.

The significant investor visa programme is designed to facilitate migration of investment migrants who are willing to invest a minimum of \$5 million in a complying investment in Australia over at least a four year period.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/mc/2014/mc212427.htm>

Stolen passports would be detected in Australia

Travellers on stolen passports like those used to board the vanished Malaysian Airlines flight are highly unlikely to get into Australia undetected, according to experts and an analysis of immigration procedures.

Australia uses a "movement alert list" which included its own intelligence holdings of about 1 million entries or individuals, according to a source familiar with the issue. The list also draws on data provided to Australia from overseas, including Interpol's stolen passports database. "Travellers are being checked the whole way through the process, from the time of their application – online or in person – to the boarding of their flight... to the primary line at the international airport at which they land," the source said.

They must apply for an electronic "eVisitor" authority online before they travel to Australia. This automatically checks them "against security and immigration risk" data, according to the Immigration Department's latest quarterly report on visitor visas. Any of 39 million stolen passports registered

with Interpol would should up immediately. Every person who stands at passport control to get into Australia has their face analysed – about 1500 to 1600 features – by facial recognition software to check them against the faces on the movement alert list. Neil Fergus, head of the firm Intelligent Risks, says it is “extremely complicated and difficult to create a forgery of an Australian passport”. On top of this, there are “airport liaison officers” at about 18 high-traffic and high-risk airports.

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/stolen-passports-would-be-detected-in-australia-say-security-leaders-20140311-34kqp.html>

Convicted doctor loses deportation fight

An Indian-born doctor who served a jail term for molesting a female hospital patient while working in Perth has lost a bid to overturn his deportation.

He lost his legal battle to keep his visa so he could stay in Australia despite his conviction. Dr Suhail Durani, who has a young son, was handed a two year and four month jail term after he was convicted of five offences against a 19-year-old female patient while examining her at RPH in February 2010. He was released on parole but taken to the Perth Immigration Detention Centre for deportation – a move he attempted to fight in the court system. A submission on his behalf during his legal battle had argued that his visa should not be cancelled because it would see him separated from his young son who was being cared for by his wife. Both his wife and child are Australian citizens.

The Federal Court dismissed his application for review, meaning he will be removed from Australia unless he appeals. Durani had been granted a visa under the skilled migration program to enable him to provide medical services in Australia. His visa has been cancelled on the back of his sexual offences which the Minister had deemed “repugnant to the Australian community and offend the values of Australian society”.

The Minister had found that while Durani’s deportation would be detrimental to his wife and son, that harm was not so severe that it outweighed the national interest in deporting him. “His sexual offending was very serious in that it undermined the integrity of the skilled migration program”.

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/latest/a/21674099/convicted-doctor-loses-deportation-fight/>

Asylum seeker jailed for indecent assault

A Bangladeshi asylum seeker has been sentenced to at least 15 months in jail for stalking and indecently assaulting a blind woman on a Sydney train. Rubel Sheikh, 26, followed the 23-year-old woman to Ashfield station in July last year before boarding a train with her. There he touched her breast twice, told her she was “sexy” and repeatedly asked her for a “goodbye kiss”, the woman said. At the Sydney Central Local Court, Sheikh was sentenced to 20 months’ jail, with a minimum term of 15 months, for aggravated indecent assault and stalking.

In sentencing, magistrate John Andrews said Sheikh had preyed on the vulnerable woman and exploited her disability. His barrister Jonathon Cohen said Sheikh has come to Australia by boat in April last year after his life was threatened in his homeland. He had become isolated, lonely and depressed after making the journey. Given time already spent in custody, he will be eligible for parole on October 30 this year, when he will probably be deported.

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/asylum-seeker--jailed-for-indecent-assault-on-blind-woman-on-train-20140219-3303h.html>

Indian student dies in detention

The man who died in a Melbourne immigration detention centre was an Indian university student whose visa had been cancelled. The 27-year-old hanged himself in his cell in the Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre after overstaying his visa, two independent sources said. The Indian community responded by saying more care should have been taken of the young man's mental health through the detention centre's duty of care. "I would urge Minister Morrison to get the system to review their arrangements in this regards," said Yadu Singh, the president of the Indian Australian Association of NSW.

"We feel sad to know about the death of this young man, our hearts go out to the parents and family members. It is well known when people go into a detention centre they are under massive stress". In recent years tensions between India and Australia had been inflamed by a series of attacks on Indian students in Melbourne, dating back to 2009. But the department would not provide figures showing how many international students were detained in detention centres in Australia, and offshore centres including Manus Island and Nauru.

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/indian-student-dies-in-maribyrnong-immigration-detention-20140214-32qcd.html>

SkillSelect

In late 2013, the department conducted an evaluation of occupational ceilings to assess how they have operated to date and to consider changes to ensure they are performing their intended function.

Based on feedback received as part of the evaluation, the following changes will be in place from 1 March 2014:

- State and territory nominated visas will no longer be subject to occupational ceiling limitations
- The minimum ceiling for each occupational group will be 1000 invitations

As there are still high levels of interest from prospective skilled migrants in the following six occupations, pro rata arrangements for these occupational groups will continue:

- Chemical and Materials Engineers
- Electronics Engineers
- Other Engineering Professionals
- ICT Business and Systems Analysts
- Software and Applications Programmers
- Telecommunications Engineering Professionals

<https://www.immi.gov.au/skills/skillselect/>

Afghan interpreters resettled in Australia

A group of Afghan interpreters who supported coalition troops in their fight against the Taliban are being resettled in Australia. About 280 translators who worked alongside Australian forces will settle in Newcastle, north of Sydney, with their families. The civilian interpreters were involved in all aspects of the war in Afghanistan, from raids to meetings of regional chiefs.

Afghanistan veteran and military fellow at the Lowy Institute for International Policy James Brown says the interpreters offered critical support to Australian troops. Mr Brown says he supports Australia's decision to grant 800 visas to the translators and their immediate families. "I think that's particularly important now that we've brought them back to live in Australia". Sister Diana Santleben from the Josephite Refugee Support Network says many of the interpreters lived in fear of revenge attacks by the Taliban after coalition troops left the region.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-11/afghan-translators/5313602>

417 workers being ripped off and harassed

Thousands of abattoir workers in Australia on working holiday visas are being ripped off and over-worked while some complain of sexual harassment, and the union says they are replacing local workers. They are supposed to be here on a working holiday, but for thousands of young Taiwanese, a holiday to Australia is anything but. The young Asian workers say they are being ripped off, harassed and forced to work unreasonable hours. They are recruited by labour hire agencies who send them to work in some cases for major Australian companies. This report from Matt Peacock.

It is 5am at the Scone meatworks in the NSW upper Hunter Valley and the morning shift is reporting for work. The vast majority are hundreds of young Taiwanese backpackers, not locals. They are in the country on 417 visas for up to two years' working holiday.

Grant Courtney of the Meatworkers' Union, Newcastle Branch said, "We're talking about excessive hours of work, we're talking about gross underpayments, we're talking about mistreatment, we're talking about allegations of sexual harassment by some of the contract bosses. If you say something wrong, say something not good for the company, you have lost your jobs," said Ian Tam, a Meatworkers' Union International Officer. "I investigated this agency. I am just pretending I'm one of them, like a backpacker looking for jobs. They would give you a form to fill in. Quick, very quick interview. They will ask you "can you work now?" They will send you to a place, in Scone or in Queensland or in Victoria, and tomorrow you will start work. They would give you lots of forms to fill in, including ABN forms. Then you ask them "How about a tax file number?" and they will just tell you "Do not worry about that. You don't need to pay tax, you can earn more money using an ABN." If you don't sign those documents, you will not get the job".

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2014/s3958527.htm>

Working Holiday visa (subclass 417)

This visa is for young people who want a holiday and work in Australia for up to a year.

You might be able to get this visa if you:

- Are at least 18 but not yet 31 years of age
- Do not have a dependent child accompanying you at any time during your stay in Australia
- Have a passport from an eligible country

You might be able to apply online by clicking the 'Apply now' button below, if you have a passport from an eligible country. See 'How to Apply' for a list of eligible countries. If you cannot apply online you can lodge a paper application form.

Apply Now: <https://online.immi.gov.au/visas/applyNow.do?form=WHM>

Download PDF Form: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1150.pdf>

Human Rights

A dream to stop all slavery

The terrified screams of a traumatised sex-trafficked teenager, witnessed by an Australian billionaire, have led to a history-making alliance between three of the world's major religions to end slavery. At the Vatican recently West Australian iron ore magnate Andrew Forrest launched the Global Freedom Network – a new organisation led by the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Grand Imam of al-Azhar in Egypt. The network aims to free the world's estimated 30 million slaves, and has set itself specific ambitious targets to achieve this. It has taken almost a year of negotiation to pull together. Andrew Forrest said, when he started researching the slave industry, he commanded a review of all his supply chains at Fortescue and required affidavits of all suppliers that they had reviewed their own supply chains. In 2010 he started building the Walk Free Foundation. Last year it published a Global Slavery Index, identifying the countries where the problem is most acute.

Pope Francis has identified slavery as one of the evils he is most keen to combat. "He is of the view that it is one of the worst scourges of humanity," Forrest said. A proposal of an alliance between multiple faiths and his Walk Free Foundation ensued. When he got the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, on board, and then flew to Cairo and recruited the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed al-Tayyeb, one of the highest scholarly authorities in Sunni Islam. Sheikh Tayyeb agreed to join the group and issue a fatwa, or religious ruling. It declares that "the worst type of human trafficking [is] the kidnapping of women and girls", prohibits "modern-day slavery in all of its types".

The network's aims include:

- All global faiths to remove any slavery-related organisations from their supply chains and investments
- 162 governments and 30 heads of state to endorse the network by the end of this year
- Political leaders to slavery-proof government supply chains
- The G20 to adopt a new anti-slavery and human trafficking initiative
- Fifty-major multi-national businesses to commit to "slavery-proofing" their supply chains

The group will set a budget, raised from big donors to a global fund to be launched at Davos next year, to help governments close the gap between policy and enforcement, to set up new strategies and put them into action. "This is set up like a high-achieving, measurement-driven, totally target-oriented company," Forrest said. "It's like a hard-edged business. We are out to defeat slavery, we are not out to feel good. This is our mission."

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/andrew-forrests-dream-to-stop-all-slavery-20140317-34y2g.html>

Comic warning to asylum seekers slammed by human rights advocates

Asylum seekers have been warned off making the journey to Australia by boat in graphic new slogans and a cartoon strip that warns of mosquito bites on two websites administered by Immigration Minister Scott Morrison. Human rights activists have slammed the Immigration Department's latest campaign as being distasteful and for blatantly advertising severe health risks of offshore detention.

Late last year Customs released a comic strip on its website warning asylum seekers of the dangers of travelling overseas, showing one Afghan man being attacked by mosquitoes in a detention camp. Documents from the Immigration Department obtained by Fairfax Media show there were four cases

of malaria contracted on Manus Island between November 2012 and August 2013. The documents said one asylum seeker and three service providers had been infected.

“The release of the government’s graphic novel as a deterrent to asylum seekers shows that Australia is well aware of the risks of sending vulnerable people to be indefinitely detained on an island with endemic tropical diseases,” said Ben Pynt, director of Human Rights Advocacy as Humanitarian Research Partners.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/comic-warning-to-asylum-seekers-slammed-by-human-rights-advocates-20140212-32iea.html>

Australia pledges help to the Syrian people

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop has announced Australia will contribute an additional \$10 million in humanitarian aid to help people affected by the conflict in Syria and \$2 million to support efforts to destroy Syria’s chemical weapons. This brings Australia’s total assistance in response to the Syrian crisis to \$112.8 million since the conflict began in 2011.

Australia has played an active role in international efforts to address the Syrian crisis including through the UN Security Council. These contributions reflect the Australian Government’s ongoing concern about the worsening conflict, its human toll and the effect on international peace and security. More than 100,000 people have died and 9.3 million people – almost half the population – are in need of humanitarian assistance. Neighbouring countries now shelter more than two million refugees, nearly three-quarters of whom are women and children.

http://www.foreginminister.gov.au/releases/2014/jb_mr_140116.html

Iraq: Marriage for 9-year-olds

Pending legislation in Iraq would restrict women’s rights in matters of inheritance and parental and other rights after divorce, make it easier for men to take multiple wives, and even allow girls to be married from age nine.

Passage of the law would be a disastrous and discriminatory step backward for Iraq’s women and girls. Every year 14 million girls under age 18 are married worldwide. Human Rights Watch works to end the practice, and the numerous human rights abuses it creates, in countries ranging from Afghanistan to Yemen.

Human Rights Watch Newsletter – 13 March 2014

Australian Multiculturalism

Harmony Day

Harmony Day, celebrated in March each year, is a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home – from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world. By participating in Harmony Day activities, we can learn and understand how all Australian from diverse backgrounds equally belong to this nation and enrich it.

<http://www.harmony.gov.au/>

Chinese Australian women helping each other

“Since 1954, the Chinese Women’s Association of Australia has supported thousands of new migrants and visitors of Chinese background. The Association helps these women find a sense of belonging in Australian society, nurtures intercultural friendships and promotes a better understanding of Chinese culture in Australia.

“Australia is home to people from almost every culture and every part of the globe, including a thriving community of more than 800 000 Australians of Chinese heritage. Australians of Chinese backgrounds have worked extremely hard to maintain their cultural heritage, while embracing and contributing to the broader Australian community.

“Their contributions, spanning generations, have helped forge the Australia that we enjoy today, and this cultural diversity is a source of great social and economic strength. Our successful multicultural society is founded on a commitment to the common elements that unite us, combined with a respect and an understanding of our social, cultural and religious difference. The Chinese Women’s Association is a truly inspiring example of these values, and I congratulate all of its members on their achievements over the past 60 year,” Senator Fierravanti-Wells said.

<http://concettafierravantiwells.dss.gov.au/media-releases/33>

Celebrating African culture in Sydney

Senator Fierravanti-Wells, who has special responsibility for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, said the Africultures Festival in Auburn was an opportunity to celebrate and share African culture with the whole community. “Diversity is one of Australia’s greatest strengths,” Senator Fierravanti-Wells said.

“The Africultures Festival brings people and families from all African communities together to celebrate the diversity and richness of African culture with the broader community and helps build a deeper understanding and appreciation of African culture and heritage. The theme of the Festival of this year is ‘Celebrating Nelson Mandela’. This is fitting and echoes the remarks of our Prime Minister Tony Abbott who in attending Mr Mandela’s funeral last year said it had more of the air of a celebration much more than the air of a funeral.

“The African community has made a substantial contribution to Australian society, enriching our economic, social and cultural life,” Senator Fierravanti-Wells said. Harmony Day is Australia’s largest national multicultural event. It is celebrated throughout Australia, which is also the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination”.

<http://concettafierravantiwells.dss.gov.au/media-releases/34>

Life-saving lesson for migrants

Wearing bright pink, participants in the Migration 2 Surf program gingerly approached the waves, hand in hand with yellow and red-capped lifesavers. For many, it was their first time in white water as they took part in the special ocean-safety course, aimed at new migrants.

Most of the 50 adults in the Coogee Surf Life Saving Club course were Iraqi and Afghan migrants from Bankstown and Liverpool. They were taught how to identify wave types and deal with rips and bluebottle stings. They were also given a short talk on the dangers of the sun by Cancer Council NSW. Next was a practical session in the crashing waves.

Lisa Quirk, an English migration and social worker who arrived in Sydney nine years ago, approached Coogee SLSC after being unable to find any instruction for those who had no prior knowledge of oceans. "I have a lot of friends from India, and a lot of them didn't have any swimming skills, but the beach is such a strong pull for those who are new to Australia," she said. "The people who get in most trouble are the non-swimmers."

Migrants on the twice yearly course, open to anyone over 18, need no swimming experience. The 49-year-old office manager from Austria said building confidence in the water had been 'life changing'. "The ocean absolutely terrified me at first. When I saw waves, I was looking at this monster coming at me. But it's not a monster, it's just water. You have to respect it". She said she hoped she gave confidence to some of the newcomers. "I've been there, I've been worried, I've been frightened. The course helped me understand what the ocean was about. It has been life changing".

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/lifesaving-lesson-for-migrants-out-of-their-depth-in-ocean-20140406-366tj.html>

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Nuclear Security Review

A team of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) experts have completed a mission to review nuclear security practices in Australia. The IAEA conducted the two-week International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) Mission at the request of the Government of Australia. The mission reviewed the country's nuclear security-related reactor operated by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) – and security arrangements applied to the transport of nuclear and other radioactive materials.

In Sydney, the team met officials from the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO) and other government agencies. "The development and expansion of nuclear power programmes and other nuclear application in member States require a strong commitment to nuclear security. The example set by Australia and by the other 38 States that have hosted IPPAS missions, illustrated the value of the IAEA's Nuclear Security Guidance for improving global nuclear security, and in particular physical protection."

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/media/releases/department/2013/dfat-release-20131115.html>

Trade in services increase in 2012-13

The biggest rises in services exports were in financial services, professional and management consulting services and business travel services. In particular, financial services exports rose 42.8 per cent to \$2.0 billion. Australia's top three services export markets were China, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Australia, with the United States and the European Union, is leading negotiations on a services-only free trade agreement known as the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), which will set a new standard in services trade commitments. The Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement (KAFTA), concluded in December last year, will provide Australian services exporters with the best treatment Korea has agreed with any trading partner, on par with its agreements with the United States and the EU.

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/media/releases/department/2014/dfat-release-20140304.html>

Resources

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade report 'Trade in Services, Australia 2012-13'
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/stats-pubs/trade-in-services.html>

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