

Press Release

19th October 2004

Israfil Shiri

Coroners Inquest, Crown Court Square, Manchester on Thursday 21st October at 11.00am.

Israfil Shiri

Memorial Meeting, Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester on Wednesday 20th October at 7pm

Coroners Inquest and Memorial Meeting Following Self-Immolation and Death of Asylum Seeker Who Slept in Rubbish Bins

Israfil Shiri an Iranian sought refuge in Britain in 2002. He was a sick man who relied heavily on prescribed medication.

Denied all benefits and the right to work when his application for asylum failed in 2002 he was made totally destitute. In accordance with Government policy as a failed asylum seeker, his crucial access to drugs and medication was also blocked.

In extreme distress, Israfil Shiri lived a transient life often sleeping in rubbish bins.

In late August 2003 Israfil Shiri entered the offices of Refugee Action in Salford. He poured petrol on himself and set himself alight. Suffering seventy percent burns, he died in Manchester's Wythenshawe Hospital five days later.

The coroner's inquest into the death of Israfil Shiri is the first in Britain in which the Government's destitution policy is under consideration as a contributory factor.

A vigil over death through destitution will take place at 9.30am outside the coroner's court.

Contact: Rhetta Moran

Mobile: 07776264646