

A S I A & P A C I F I C



AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In **Australia**, UNHCR held a World Refugee Day event at **Parliament House** in Canberra and launched a **high school writing competition** on "Refugees: Telling their Stories". The Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs spoke on the theme, "A Place to Call Home". About 80 representatives from the government, NGOs and high schools attended.

Sydney Girls High School organised "**Live like a Refugee for a Day**", designed to help students learn about the hardships endured by refugees, which raised money for UNHCR's Afghan Shelter Programme.

The **Australian Chamber Orchestra** dedicated its performance at the Sydney Opera House on 20 June to "the resilience and courage of refugees around the world" by reading out a short statement.

Australia for UNHCR hosted a **breakfast** in Sydney for more than 350 guests launched by the Governor of New South Wales. The breakfast raised about AUD 25,000 after costs.

World Refugee Day **materials** were sent to over 400 organisations including schools, community organisations, NGOs, migrant resource centres, government offices and various advocacy groups. A group of volunteers in Brisbane coordinated a **website** of World Refugee Day events taking place around Australia, including information on UNHCR: <http://www.worldrefugeeday.org.au>

Community events around the country included:

- Schools staged various events on refugee issues, displayed **posters**, held **discussion groups**, **art exhibitions** and **special assemblies**, invited speakers, read stories and wrote articles for **newsletters**. Some schools also held **fundraising events**.
- A number of local government areas declared themselves "**A Refugee Welcome Zone**". The **Field of Hearts** installation was held at over 20 locations across Australia.
- **Rallies**, **art shows**, **film screenings**, **candlelight vigils**, **concerts** and other events took place. Various church groups hosted **Masses** across the country.
- The "**Flotilla of Hope**", a group of boats, set sail for Nauru from Sydney.
- Rural Australians for Refugees held **tree planting days**, symbolically providing safe havens for refugees to put down roots.
- Amnesty International's "**Daybreak in Detention**" protested in 50 locations around Australia against the Government's mandatory detention policy.

In **New Zealand**, UNHCR provided support to World Refugee Day celebrations which included a **multicultural concert** in Auckland and a function in the Grand Hall at Parliament Buildings in Wellington.

A large number of refugees attended and watched **dance** and **music** performed by the Afghan, Eritrean, Burundi, Somali and Ethiopian communities. Performers ranged from small children to adults. The Minister of Ethnic Affairs attended the concert, which was followed by a **meal** prepared by refugee groups. The concert was organised by the Refugee and Migrant Service, New Zealand's resettlement NGO, the New Zealand Immigration Service, the Ministry of Education and King's College.

Around 150 representatives of refugee communities and groups working with refugees participated in an **evening function** at Parliament jointly hosted by the Minister of Immigration and the Refugee and Migrant Service.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the World Refugee Day programme included placing the High Commissioner's World Refugee Day statement as an opinion piece in the major newspapers and broadcasting the **TV spot** on national TV.

BANGLADESH

On 27 May, the Bangladesh Human Rights Journalists' Forum and UNHCR held a **discussion meeting** on "Refugee Issues and the Role of the Media" as part of the World Refugee Day programme.

On 20 June, in collaboration with Rainbow Film Society, UNHCR conducted a **seminar** on "Bengal Partition and Refugee Issues" in Dhaka. A keynote paper was presented and a number of participants discussed it. The event was attended by intellectuals, academics, human rights activists, representatives from diplomatic and UN missions, the media and government officials. The discussion was followed by a **three-day film show** on refugee and migration issues. A total of seven feature films were screened. At the end of the day, a **reception** took place.

World Refugee Day was celebrated on 20 June in Nayapara camp with the participation of refugees, camp officials, local authorities, UN staff and NGOs working in the camp. The Head of the UNHCR office gave a **speech**. The aim of the day was explained as well as the meaning of having "a place to call home". A speech by a refugee representative followed. A **video show, essay and art competition and handicraft exhibition** were also organised. Prizes were distributed to the winners of the art competition and handicraft exhibition.

On 6 July, UNHCR's implementing partner, Bangladesh Bar Council, organised a **seminar** on "Accession to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugee". A keynote paper was presented by a member of the Law Commission and a former judge in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. About 100 judges, lawyers, human rights activists, government officials, and journalists attended the programme.

CHINA

Sina.com, one of the most popular **websites** in China, provided prominent coverage of World Refugee Day. An 11-page World Refugee Day report was posted on the homepage of its news centre - which has 30 million hits daily - for five days.

Beijing Youth Daily, one of China's biggest national newspapers with a circulation of 600,000 copies, dedicated a whole page to World Refugee Day. The **report** included background information on UNHCR, the global refugee situation and several pictures depicting this year's World Refugee Day theme.

A **thirty-minute programme** by China Central Television International Service, "Dialogue", gave coverage to UNHCR. It included an interview with the former High Commissioner, Sadako Ogata. The programme was broadcast three times on 20 June and once on 21 June. The English news on the same channel also dedicated several minutes to World Refugee Day by reviewing the global refugee situation and showing a short **documentary** on the repatriation of Afghan refugees. The news was broadcast twice on prime time and was also cited by other news programmes.

Xinhua News Agency, the biggest news agency in China, released the High Commissioner's World Refugee Day statement, as well as refugee stories and photos.

INDIA

A **round table** on the theme "A Place to Call Home" was organized at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The three durable solutions for refugees and their applicability to those in India were discussed in detail. The sessions on Myanmar and Bhutan were chaired by a representative of the National Human Rights Commission. Speakers included eminent academics

and representatives from the refugee community. Sixty-five people attended the round table and among the audience were scholars, members of policy institutes, diplomats, media and an official from the Ministry of External Affairs.

From 19 to 21 June, UNHCR and its partner agencies organised cultural events including **concerts, dances and plays**, which were well attended by the refugee community. Around 60 people, mostly ethnic Afghan refugees attended the event at the Socio-Legal Implementing Centre (SLIC), which included a screening of a **documentary** on the Myanmarese refugee camps in Mizoram.

On 21 June, almost 300 refugees attended each of the events organized by YMCA New Delhi at Vikaspuri and Voluntary Health Association Delhi (VHAD) in South Delhi. VHAD organized a **medical camp** and an **eye camp** for refugees. Events were also organized in Faridabad and Laxmi Nagar.

Refugee associations, such as the All Burmese Refugee Community and the Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society (for Afghans of Indian origin), celebrated World Refugee Day. In both places, some 200 refugees participated.

INDONESIA

On 25 June, an outing, arranged by UNHCR in cooperation with its implementing partners Yayasan Pulih and Palang Merah Indonesia, took place at the recreational park/beach called “*Taman Impian Jaya Ancol*” in Jakarta. About 120 refugees originally from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Afghanistan, Vietnam and other countries participated. Refugee men engaged in **soccer and volleyball games**, refugee women took part in **flower arrangement and cooking competitions**, while refugee children participated in **drawing and running competitions**. All refugees received a **T-shirt displaying the World Refugee Day logo**. The programme was followed by a **musical performance** with local traditional Arabic music called *Marawis*, which was played during the games and competitions.

In the same week, the local radio 68H interviewed the **UNHCR Regional Representative** in relation to World Refugee Day on the current situation of refugees in South-East Asia. The programme was aired on the “Asia calling” programme on 19 and 20 June.

World Refugee Day was also celebrated by **five universities in Yogyakarta** on 22 June. Some films about refugees were presented and materials, such as brochures and videos, were distributed to these universities.

JAPAN

From 18 June to 14 July, the World Refugee Day “**Refugee Photo**” exhibition took place in the hall of the UN University Building in Tokyo, featuring photos of refugees from Africa and Myanmar, as well as returnees in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. A special event to mark the opening of the exhibition was held on 18 June. Some 140 people including students, media, NGO staff and invited government officials attended. The exhibition attracted over 2,000 people and media coverage was good.

Refugee **photo exhibitions** were held in two different campuses of Kwansai University in Kobe before and after World Refugee Day. UNHCR staff gave a **lecture** on refugees and UNHCR’s work to over 500 students. Students also organised an event titled “Do you know anything about refugees?” at Nishinomiya Centre for University Students. Some 100 people, mainly students, enjoyed the **movie “Beyond Borders”** and a **presentation** on the Afghan situation.

UNHCR staff gave **speeches** in Tokyo Keizai University, which displayed **refugee photos and posters**. Several other refugee **photo exhibitions** and **lectures** were held in various part of the country.

MALAYSIA

Following a **press conference** by the UNHCR Representative on the occasion of World Refugee Day, a number of leading local newspapers published feature **articles** on refugee issues worldwide, as well as on the refugee situation in Malaysia (about 10 papers covered the event throughout the whole country). One **local TV breakfast programme** also invited UNHCR staff as guest speakers. UNHCR and local NGOs spent the day of 20 June in one of the refugee settlements in the jungle, celebrating **Mass** with one refugee group and having **lunch** together with all the other groups.

NEPAL

On 19 June, there was an **exhibition** of products made by Bhutanese refugees and a **screening of UNHCR documentaries** “Working with Refugees” and “Global View 2004” in the Nepal Red Cross Society Hall in the refugee camps in Damak, Jhapa district.

On 20 June, the **World Refugee Day statement** was read out by UNHCR staff in the seven Bhutanese refugee camps. **Cultural programmes, football and sport competitions** for disabled children, a **debate** among school students and a **drama** on this year's theme were organised in the Bhutanese refugee camps.

A **magic show** for children took place on 21 June in the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, and a UNHCR **documentary** was screened. A Tibetan film, “Caravan”, was also shown.

An **interview** with the UNHCR Representative was published in a local daily newspaper. Another interview by the UNHCR Representative about the role of UNHCR in finding solutions for Bhutanese refugees was telecast on a local TV channel. A special radio programme on World Refugee Day (30 minutes), jointly produced by Kanchenjunga FM (a local FM station) and UNHCR, was broadcast on 20 and 23 June by the same FM station.

SRI LANKA

In Kilinochchi, 50 people participated in a **28-mile cycling marathon** from Mallavi to Kilinochchi to remember the displacement to Mallavi and the return to Kilinochchi, as well as those who are still displaced. At the end of the race, local authorities, partners, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) attended an award ceremony at the Kilinochchi Sports Ground with a slide show of photos taken by refugees and IDPs.

In Kalimootai and Pulankulam, over 150 people participated in an **aid awareness day** featuring **street drama**.

In Jaffna, after a drama and sports festival, all of the participants pressed their hands on a banner in colorful paint, making a testament to their joint accomplishments.

THAILAND

A series of activities took place in all nine refugee camps on the Thai-Myanmar border from 18 to 22 June. The activities included **speeches** on the subject of voluntary repatriation; **debates** on leadership and the roles of various leaders in the camp environment; **drawing, poem and essay contests; exhibitions and film screenings; games and sport competitions; cultural and traditional performances; dissemination of information** on sexual and gender-based violence. The celebrations were well attended by camp residents, UNHCR and NGO representatives, local authorities and representatives from local communities in some camps.

A **series of films** on UNHCR and refugees was screened at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok from 14 to 25 June, where **World Refugee Day posters** were also displayed. Two **articles** on World Refugee Day, one in English and another in the local language, were published in daily newspapers.