

The new Monster for Asylum seekers in Germany.

We accept the universal fact that as humans, we have a duty to obey the general rules and regulations governing any environment we find ourselves.

Nevertheless, it is human when people in positions of Authority apply discretion in the cause of dispensing their duties in such ways that does not conflict with the laid down laws.

It is also an obvious fact that asylum seekers are entitled to the benefits of the basic rights and necessities enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

From the German perspective however, experience has shown that as an asylum seeker, one is regarded as being 'less than a human being'. Hence, the inhuman treatment and ceaseless pressures such as packaged food, 20.45euros (fortnightly) pocket money, confined residence (residenzpflicht), limited health care and other forms of arbitrary denial of personal privacy and dignity amongst others. The only 'sin' of these refugees was to seek protection in Germany; a country that prides itself as the most developed in Europe, a bastion of democracy and model for human right practices as enjoined by the UDHR-to which Germany is signatory.

It goes further. Letters were distributed by local foreigners' offices to asylum seekers who are listed for identification exercise (for the purpose of forced and violent deportation) in cooperation with 'mobile consulate' sitting in designated German locations.

It was strange to know that while some victims had detailed description of the destination for such exercise, some had just the name of the City while others had no formal notice until the Police came in at the middle of the night to pick them up.

This identification exercise has been a routine practice in all parts of Germany but recent investigation revealed a shocking attitude in the way it has always been conducted at Ludwisburg, Baden-Wüttemberg.

Confirmation of what had always seem rumour was proven recently that the police had extended their intimidation tactics to striping the victims totally naked, asking them to bow and open their anus as well as taking note of any visible scar found on their body. Refugees/asylum seekers were further photographed and fingerprinted just as it was done at the 'Bundesamt' - the initial asylum application point.

This utterly dehumanising act has been on over the years, as previous victims explained. Another victim expressed his embarrassment from the comment of a police officer *shone arsch* after being compelled to take off his underwear. When asked why they could not resist this inhuman treatment, the response was, "we feared being brutalised and based on the fact that we were in their hands, we could hardly think of a way to immediately resist as we were too shocked".

Further investigation confirmed that the address "140/7 Osterholzalle" for this routine exercise is a building housing the criminal Police in Ludwisburg hence one could imagine the possibility of Camera installations covering this awful nightmare.

I was also faced with such forced identification exercise even when my embassy called the RP accompanied by a fax to confirm my identity as at 2006 when I was asked by the RP to go and identify myself at my Embassy. This time i was meant to appear at Dullarcallee 100, Karlsruhe in April 2007. I went there on my own as I felt it was an embarrassment for the police to treat me with such disrespect as those who had refused to adhere to the RP request to appear at their embassy.

It was a very tense atmosphere with Police officers on anti-riot outfit as if it was a war situation. We were thoroughly searched and striped of all our belongings until the end of the process. After this search, a Statement written in Deutsch was given to us for signature and when I insisted on translation, I was given an acclaimed English translation but was compelled to sign the Deutsch version even when I felt there were discrepancies in both copies.

We were further sent into a room where we were expected to remain for as much as 5hrs or more until it gets to one's time to appear before representatives of both the Embassy and German authorities.

When anyone wished to use the toilet, he/she was escorted by a police officer who stands by the door which must be left open, resulting in a lot of unease and sometimes diverting the real intention. It was a stark reminder of the torture tactics of General Abacha regime up till the present day die hard Nigerian Politicians. But this is Germany of the 21st century in the heart of Europe.

Locked up in that room with fellow victims, all we could see through the only available window were more victims who were brought to the venue on handcuffs and strong police parade

We are yet to confirm if this is merely a means of intimidation designed by the German authorities with their police officers or simply the norm. However, we also have not ascertained if the embassy authorities are aware of the treatment meted to their citizens. This situation has gone beyond the issue of identifying the nationalities of the victims but rather an issue of inhuman treatment against foreigners here in Germany.

Enough is enough for all these indignities perpetuated by the German authorities. We deem it absolutely necessary for reputable human right representatives to be part of such exercises as this will reduce the rate of intimidation and connivance in the abhorrent deportation of asylum seekers.

Furthermore, we enjoin everyone to be watchful and critical of these practices of the German government and that such activities as in Ludwisburg amounts to the full abuse of Article 4,5,9 and 12 of the UDHR.

RNN - Refugee News Network
The Voice refugee forum
Baden-Württemberg
Thevoice_bd@yaho.de