



VALERIE GRANTED URGENT QUESTION ON VIOLENCE IN BURMA

Valerie said: "As a result of civilian deaths that morning I requested an Urgent Question, which the Speaker the Rt Hon John Bercow MP kindly granted, on Burmese army attacks on civilians in the Kachin state. A 15 year old boy and a 76 year old pastor were among those killed over recent days along with a number of other civilians. This reflects the gravity of the situation and the need for the British Government to do what it can to address the situation."

In response to Valerie's question, the Minister said that the Government is determined to make contact with all sides and to ensure that hostilities cease altogether. He went on to say that the UK's aid contribution to displaced people in Kachin had now reached £3.5 million and that sanctions have only been suspended, not lifted.



ADOPTION 10 MINUTE RULE BILL

Valerie met with the Minister for Children and Families, Edward Timpson MP to discuss proposals to equalise leave, pay and allowance arrangements for adoptive parents with those available to parents whose children are born to them.

Valerie said: "I was very pleased to meet with the Minister to discuss the provisions contained in my Adoption (Leave Pay and Allowance Arrangements) Bill. I introduced the Bill under the Ten Minute Rule procedure on 29 June 2011. Since then I have been having discussions with various Government ministers as to how the provisions of my Bill can be taken forward."

ATOS DEBATE

Valerie spoke in a debate in the House of Commons on problems with ATOS Work Capability Assessments.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Valerie said: "I have had constituents coming to me with their carers in their wheelchairs, because they wanted me to know the difficulties they face. They can't understand why in the face of overwhelming medical evidence that they are still called in for an interview. They can't understand why they are told 'if you make it to the interview, you must be fit for work', as some of them have been told. They can't understand why, when 40% of their appeals have been upheld, that the minister says the system still works. The overall mood of the House has been one of disappointment with the Minister's unhelpful response."



QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT

This month, Valerie has asked a number of questions to Ministers in Parliament.

Among these questions, Valerie asked:

The Sports Minister: what representations he has made

to the FA to request that it issues clear guidance on dealing with racist, homophobic or sexist abuse.

The Leader of the House: what the Government is doing to address the problem of land grabs in countries including Indonesia and Burma.

The Secretary of State for Health: how he will assess the impact of the Cancer Drugs fund on survival rates.

The Foreign Office Minister: what representations he has made to the Burmese Government to ensure the continuation of the ceasefire in Kachin.

The full transcripts of Valerie's questions and the Ministers' responses can be read [here](#).

HEALTH COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Health Select Committee, of which Valerie is a member, has published reports this month into the Care Quality Commission and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. More information is available [here](#).

WOODSIDE CLOSE

Valerie said: "I am pleased the Committee declined to determine this application. I have been supporting local residents in their opposition to this development over the past 2 years and suggested that they call on the Council to invoke its powers to decline to determine the application. The decision makes clear that it is unacceptable in law to repeatedly submit applications with a view to wearing down local opposition."

THE ROYAL INSTITUTION

Following reports that the Royal Institution's building at 21 Albemarle Street may be sold Valerie tabled Early Day Motion (EDM) 944 which calls on the Government to ensure the Royal Institution's future. 21 Albemarle Street was the workplace of Sir Humphry Davy, Michael Faraday and many other renowned British scientists.

NEW ART GALLERY

Despite submitting what has been widely recognised to be an extremely strong bid, the New Art Gallery has narrowly lost out on the opportunity to host the Turner Prize in 2015.

Valerie said: "I am disappointed the Gallery was not selected. Bringing the Turner Prize to Walsall would have given the Borough a very welcome economic boost."

"The bid has led to both the highly successful resumption of Sunday openings which I campaigned for and has raised the profile of the Gallery nationally."

Surgeries

Valerie holds regular surgeries. To arrange an appointment, please call the Constituency Office on 01922 635835

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