

Blood-test challenge by couple in bid for Pakistan children

A BRITISH-born mother, fighting to bring three children from Pakistan, has offered to take blood tests, with her husband, to prove that the children are theirs.

And Mrs Anwar Sultana Ditta, aged 25, added:

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JAIL 'WAGER' IN PARENTAGE CLAIM

"If it can be proved they are not our children, we are willing to go to jail for 20 years — a murderer's sentence."

Mrs Ditta, and her husband Mr Shuja Ud Din, aged 34, of 127 Crawford Street, Rochdale, have fought since 1975 to be reunited with the children they say are their own.

The "blood-test-or-jail" offer came after she wrote to the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher — and received the reply: "Your letter is receiving attention."

She turned to Mrs Thatcher in August, appealing to her on "compassionate grounds." She wrote:

"... I have approached my MP, Mr Cyril Smith, who took up the case with the Home Office, but so far they have been unhelpful.

"I therefore appeal to your honour to please come to my rescue in reuniting my family here.

"The grandmother of the children being sick and too old, cannot look after them and I request you to kindly allow my children to join me on compassionate grounds.

"I enclose a copy of a local newspaper cutting for ready reference."

In reply, Mrs Ditta received a letter written on 24 September and signed by a Mr S T Wright. It said: "The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your recent letter which is receiving attention."

BORN IN BRITAIN

Now Mrs Ditta asks: "Where are my rights as a woman born in Britain?"

"The Government is making all this fuss about nationalised British women. What about a British-born woman who can't even bring her children in?"

"It's like murder, the way they make a mother suffer over her children. I am convinced the Government does not care about human beings."

Mrs Ditta, who was born in Birmingham, was brought up and went to school in Rochdale. She married her husband in Pakistan in 1968, when she was 15. She returned to England in 1975 but the children — Kamran, aged eight, Imran, aged six, and Saima, aged five — were not allowed to follow.

The grounds given by the Home Office were that the couple had not "established that they are the parents of the three children" and that there were "serious discrepancies" concerning Mrs Ditta's age, her husband's arrival and subsequent overstay in the United Kingdom, and their second marriage in England, in 1975.

Mrs Ditta has bought their three-bedroomed home in Crawford Street, in anticipation of her children's arrival. She asked: "What would I want such a big house for, if not the children?"

She has sent clothes and money to her children every month since 1975. She has receipts and letters sent to her by the children.

She also has a copy of the first letter written to her by her youngest son, Imran, and a piece of paper on which the children drew the shape and size of their feet so that their mother could buy the correct size shoes to send to them.

Mrs Ditta regularly telephones the children and has run up telephone bills for hundreds of pounds. "Why should I spend all this money on children who are not mine?" she asked.

She has a collection of photographs of the children at different ages and pictures of herself with the children.

She said: "I just cannot cope with the pain any more. I cry constantly and lie awake thinking of my children. Last week, the doctor put me on tranquillisers.

"I want the Home Office to investigate the case properly. I'm even willing to pay for them to send someone to Pakistan to find out the facts."

Protest rally speech

MRS DITTA will address a rally in Manchester today in support of her four-year fight for the three children in Pakistan to join her in Rochdale.

The rally and march is also on behalf of grandmother Mrs Said Bibi and Mrs Nasira Begum, both of whom face deportation.

Mrs Bibi, aged 80, blind in

one eye and almost deaf, has been allowed to stay with her family in Rochdale while a doctor said she was not well enough to travel.

But the "sick note" ran out this week and Mrs Bibi could be sent home any day.

Mrs Begum lives in Manchester and faces deportation after being deserted by her British husband.

The demonstration starts at 2 pm at All Saints, Oxford Road.

Gracie's last act for young fans

BROADFIELD School has received a photograph of Gracie Fields, signed by the singer hours before she died.

Mr Barry Cunliffe, headmaster, said: "We wrote to Gracie asking her to autograph the photograph for us to raffle at our Christmas fair."

He received a letter from Gracie's personal secretary, Mrs Mary Davey, who returned the photograph, complete with the late star's signature.

Mrs Davey wrote: "I am sorry the photograph has not been returned to you before this. As a matter of fact, it was the very last thing Gracie signed before she died.

"Looking at the photograph, it does not seem possible that it was taken only a year ago. I still cannot believe it. Boris has not been at all well with his heart trouble, but I hope we will be able to leave on the 11th for England."

The photograph of Gracie will be raffled at the school's

Christmas Fair on 1 December. Another prize will be one of her scarves.

Two remanded

PAUL Greenwood, aged 19, of no fixed address, was fined £10 with £5 costs by Rochdale magistrates on Monday after he admitted being drunk and disorderly in Oldham Road, Rochdale, on 2 November.

Greenwood was also jointly accused with Kevin Tweedale, aged 30, of North Street, Rochdale, of two further offences.

Each denied stealing lead worth £3 and doing £25 damage to a roof in North Street on 22 October. They were remanded on bail until 3 January.

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