

Arrests after immigration raids at city restaurants

Wednesday, September 19, 2012

Three men from Bangladesh were taken into custody after they were arrested in UK Border Agency raids targeting illegal working in Exeter.

In the first raid, agency officers went to Red Rose, North Street and checked the immigration status of staff.

A 29-year-old man who was working in the kitchen was arrested on suspicion of staying in the country illegally after his student visa expired.

Officers then went to Real India, South Street, entering the business at 7.55pm on Tuesday on a warrant obtained from local magistrates.

After staff were questioned, two kitchen workers – aged 26 and 33 – were arrested on suspicion of overstaying their visas.

Officers talked to customers present to explain why they were carrying out the operation and left the restaurant at 8.30pm.

The three men arrested were taken to Heavitree Road police station where they were questioned. If they are confirmed to be immigration offenders they face removal from the UK.

Adam Duffin, of the UK Border Agency, said: "Illegal working has damaging social and economic consequences for the UK. It undercuts businesses that operate within the law, undermines British workers and exploits migrant workers.

"It is important that we crack down on people and businesses who are breaking the law and we make no apology for doing so.

"Our operations are carried out quickly and professionally, causing the minimal possible disruption to customers and to the legally-employed members of staff."

Real India and Red Rose are being served with civil penalty notices warning that they will face fines of up to £10,000 per illegal worker unless they can prove they carried out the correct pre-employment checks.

Every year, the UK Border Agency imposes civil penalties on hundreds of companies which fail to carry out the necessary right-to-work checks on their staff. In 2011 the agency served more than 1,100 penalty notices on employers, collecting nearly £7 million in penalty fines.

Anyone who has information on suspected immigration offenders can visit <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/contact/report-crime/>.

<http://www.thisisexeter.co.uk/Arrests-immigration-raids-city-restaurants/story-16936061-detail/story.html>