

THE TIMES



SATURDAY

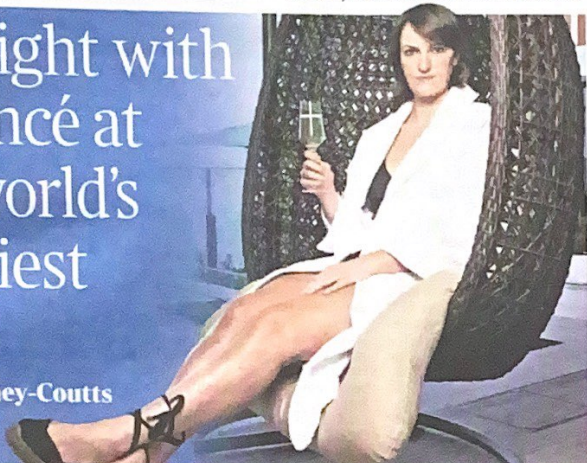
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MAGAZINE



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Appeals ban for migrants who reach UK illegally

Law to curb asylum claims — and court wrangles

Mott Dathan Home Affairs Editor
Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Rishi Sunak is gearing up for a battle with the courts over plans to prevent migrants who have crossed the Channel in small boats from appealing against their deportation.

The Home Office has drawn up two options to achieve the prime minister's goal of automatically barring people who arrive in Britain illegally from claiming asylum, The Times has learnt.

The more radical proposal would take the unprecedented step of withdrawing the right of illegal arrivals to appeal against their automatic exclusion from the asylum system. A second proposal under consideration would only allow them to lodge an appeal after they had been deported.

At present, asylum seekers have the right to remain in the country to have their case heard. Critics of the appeal proposals said they would "start hitting problems from day one".

Sunak has made his pledge to "stop the boats" one of his five priorities amid anger at the government's failure to tackle the issue. A record 45,756 migrants crossed the Channel last year, a 60 per cent rise from 2021.

A separate proposal would bar migrants arriving illegally from using parts of the Human Rights Act to avoid deportation, such as claiming their

right to family life or right to liberty was being breached.

Draft legislation is still being worked on but Sunak is hoping to present it this month. In an interview with TalkTV on Thursday, he said the new law would enable the state to detain migrants who arrived illegally and deport them to their home country or a safe third country, such as Rwanda.

However, a report by the Refugee Council said that, based on last year's crossings, it would cost nearly £1 billion a year to detain all those who arrived.

A government source said: "The prime minister and home secretary are working flat out to bring forward the legislation as soon as possible and ensure that it is legally watertight."

The legislation will make all individuals who arrive illegally permanently inadmissible to the asylum system, as previously revealed by The Times.

Home Office lawyers warned that this would simply lead to each individual lodging a judicial review, claiming it breached Britain's obligations under the UN Refugee Convention. Suella Braverman, the home secretary, has drawn up the two proposals to avoid this scenario, which would delay removals and clog up the courts.

A source familiar with the thinking said: "There is a need to neutralise the right to challenge because effectively

Continued on page 2



Police theory Officers have a "working hypothesis" that Nicola Bulley, 45, a mother who vanished while walking her dog in Lancashire on January 27, may have fallen in the River Wyre. Search teams were no closer to finding her last night. Page 5

British Gas investigation

Exclusive

Debt collectors boasted of disconnecting families

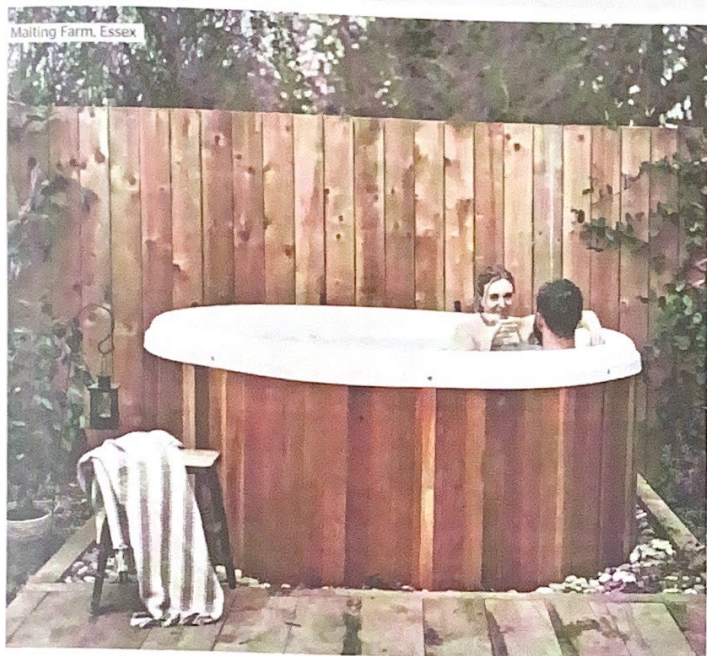
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Malting Farm, Essex



Barcelo Lanzarote

Late deals and last-minute escapes :

Not booked your Valentine's break, half-term holiday or ski trip yet? Never fear, **Richard Mellor** has you covered

Valentine's breaks

Fizz and fine-dining at a palace in Malta

The stylish Xara Palace occupies a 17th-century palazzo up on the old bastions of Mdina, a minute baroque-style city in central Malta. Available from February 9-28, when the Mediterranean island averages 14C, the hotel's Touch of Romance package involves lovebirds being greeted with fizz and roses before enjoying a horse-drawn carriage ride and a six-course tasting menu at the hotel's Michelin-starred rooftop restaurant, de Mondion. Antique furniture and Parisian fabrics then await in your king-sized bedroom. Three nights' B&B from £468pp (xarapalace.com.mt). Fly to Valletta.

Posh pub in rural Wiltshire

On the Duke of Somerset's undulating estate in, er, Wiltshire, the Bradley Hare is a classic village inn within half an hour's drive of Bath and Stonehenge. Five of its bright, beautiful bedrooms fill an old coach house; the rest populate the main, garden-hugged Georgian building, where seasonal posh-pub fare is served beside crackling

log fires. February stays are discounted by 30 per cent. B&B doubles from £105 (thebradleyhare.co.uk).

Sweet nothings in Bruges

There's only one way to improve a Valentine's Day package at Martin's Relais in cobbled Bruges: add a box of Belgian pralines from the nearby Chocolaterie Jan De Clerck. The hotel is spread across five canal houses, and the package includes sparkling wine, a bed scattered with rose petals and a waterside room. B&B doubles from £132 are available all month with the extras, except Saturdays (martins-hotels.com). Take the train to Bruges.

Half-term holidays

A foodie stay in North Cornwall

Cornwall's north coast is great in February thanks to a strong surf scene, snugly spas — try St Enodoc Hotel — and you might actually get reservations at the restaurants in and around Padstow. The rental firm Latitude 50 has good availability across its self-catering homes, including the new Turnstones, an angular, contemporary confection that looks seawards over Polzeath Beach and is accessible and dog-friendly. Three nights' self-catering for eight costs from £1,047 (latitude50.co.uk)

Icebergs and aurora borealis in Iceland

Families have a good chance of seeing the northern lights during a half-term road trip exploring Iceland. Wholly tailor-made to your tastes, the trip might feature hikes

to frozen waterfalls, snow-framed soaks in geothermal baths, whale watching, ice caves and the iceberg-lined Jokulsarlon glacial lagoon. The spectacular island will be mighty chilly, but also blissfully uncrowded compared with summer. Departing on February 11 or 12, seven nights' B&B costs from £1,700pp for a family of four, including flights, transport and activities (stubbormmuletravel.com).

Cosy glamping on an Essex farm

In the village of Little Bentley, near Colchester, Malting Farm contains bell tents, treehouses and three oak-framed luxury cabins around its 300-acre estate. Set in a glade, two of the latter trio — which have underfloor heating, covered terraces and private hot tubs — still have half-term availability, and using the code FEBHALFTERM lets you save 10 per cent. After the kids have helped to feed pigs and horses, you can borrow bikes or go seal-spotting on the coast. Four nights' self-catering for four now starts from £594 (maltingfarm.co.uk).

Sunshine and activities galore in the Canaries

A climbing wall, paddleboarding possibilities and local running trails help the Barcelo Lanzarote Active Resort live up to its name, as do bikes for hire, aqua trampoline classes and three swimming pools — one of them a ten-lane Olympic-sized colossus. Completed last year, the resort has 659 comfortable rooms and is close to golf courses and beaches. For a family of four departing from Stansted on February 11,

seven nights' B&B costs from £1,119pp, including flights, baggage and transfers (jet2holidays.com).

Ski and snowy trips

Funky ski hotel in Flaine, France

Not only are there big savings to relish on trips to Hôtel Le Flaine, this iconic property also provides free wine and weekly fondues. An eye-catching, white-concrete brutalist block, the hotel and spa is ten minutes' walk from Flaine's two gondolas. This part of the Grand Massif suits all levels, but is particularly good for beginners and intermediates. Departing on February 25, seven nights' half-board costs from £884pp, including flights from Manchester and transfers (crystalski.co.uk).

Half-term skiing in Bulgaria

Having recently received heavy snowfall, Bansko, Bulgaria's most famous ski resort, is a good half-term bet for intermediates and beginners looking for a bargain. Its modern MPM Hotel Guinness, less than 300m from the main gondola, has spacious apartment rooms alongside a spa and buffet restaurant. Eating and drinking out is super-cheap too. Departing from Luton on February 11, seven nights' half-board for a family of four costs from £1,107pp, including flights and transfers (heidi.com).

Try snowshoeing in Austria

Walks Worldwide is offering £100 off all of its guided group tours if you book before February 23 using the code WINTER23.

More deals next page

The Bradley Hare, Wiltshire



► One imminent option is a snowshoeing trip to Austria's picturesque Salzkammergut region. Having received a lesson in how to use the large footwear, you will hike along trails through alpine forests and meadows to lofty, lake-facing viewpoints fuelled by hot chocolates in mountain huts. Departing on March 5, five nights' half-board costs from £1,159pp, including flights (walksworldwide.com).

Ski like 007 in Switzerland

Switzerland's Lauterbrunnen Valley has attracted skiers from World Cup downhillers to James Bond (fleeing Blofeld in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*). In the village of Wengen, next to nursery slopes and very near a cable car, the Alpine-style Beausite Park Hotel provides an indoor spa and pool to soothe any post piste kinks. Reduced by £520, seven nights' half-board costs from £1,569pp departing on February 25, including flights from Birmingham and transfers (sno.co.uk).

Bargain Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ten miles southwest of Sarajevo, Bjelasnica hosted part of the 1984 Winter Olympics. Today the Bosnian peak offers a decent array of red and blue runs, and although it's low and suffered earlier in the season, there's snow at present. One kilometre — covered by free shuttles — from its resort centre, Hotel Bjelasnica incorporates a sauna and spa, a fire-heated lounge, a pub and local-inspired food each evening. Seven nights' half-board costs from £381pp departing on February 26, including flights from Gatwick and transfers (igluski.com).

February escapes

A tour of Cambodia

February usually delivers pleasantly hot, dry days in Cambodia, ideal for touring the southeast Asian kingdom's giant, jungle-snagged temples. Before Angkor, enjoy a Khmer homestay and pay respects at the Killing Fields during a small-group Cambodia Discovery tour. Starting in Vietnam and finishing in Thailand, its February 18 departure has been discounted by 15 per cent, so 11 nights' room-only costs from £901pp, including bus transfers (intrepid-travel.com). Fly to Ho Chi Minh City.

Hit Hopper show in NYC

You've got until March 5 to catch *Edward Hopper's New York* at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Travel there this month and you can also enjoy discounted Broadway shows and skate at the Rockefeller Center's ice rink. Based at the modern and luxurious Fifty Hotel & Suites in Midtown, three nights' B&B costs from £1,258pp, including flights, private transfers, exhibition tickets and concierge services (kirkerholidays.com).

Mozambique paradise

At the community-minded Azura Benguerra lodge on Mozambique's dreamy Bazaruto Archipelago, just 20 thatched beach villas complement an array of activities from crocodile safaris to dives round pristine reefs. Hefty 45 per cent discounts are available on stays until March 31 to anyone booking this month. Seven nights' full board from £2,563pp, including helicopter transfers (aardvark-safaris.com). Fly to Maputo.



Veranda Grand Baie, Mauritius

15 nights All Inclusive from £3,019pp*

Why just take a holiday when you can do so much more on a tour? On this all-inclusive adventure you'll set out on guided rainforest walks, spot exotic birds and wildlife and explore fascinating natural history and archaeology in the National Museum. With all this plus your meals, selected drinks and even travel to the airport included, all you have to do is pack.

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Deals to book now, travel later

Early-booking discount for Rhodes, Greece

Book your Greek island summer holiday this month to score a 20 per cent saving. That's the proposal from Ella Resorts, whose two large properties on Rhodes — the family-friendly Heleia, complete with a waterpark, and the adult-orientated Elissa, a more laid-back blend of rangy restaurants, pool bars and a beach club — are designed in svelte, straight-lined style. Four nights' B&B at Elissa now costs from £220pp (ellaresorts.com). There's no minimum-stay requirement, and travel must be between April 20 and October 31. Fly to Rhodes.

Cut-price Caribbean

In northwestern St Lucia, Reduit Beach is a mile-long stretch of pearly sand in the horseshoe-shaped Rodney Bay. While most resorts nearby are bland all-inclusives, the adults-only SoCo House hotel is a slick, sugar-white cube. Between sampling the central pool, free

beach shuttle and Caribbean food, set off to ride rainforest zip lines or try bubbling mud baths. Now halved in price, seven nights' all-inclusive costs from £1,199pp, including flights, transfers and spa discounts. You must book in February and travel on selected dates in May, June, September, October or November (bluebaytravel.co.uk).

Stay in style in Mauritius

One of Mauritius's first hotels, the beachside Veranda Grand Baie is to reopen on July 1 after an extensive refurbishment. Guests will find an infinity pool facing the neighbouring green-blue lagoon, delicious Mauritian cuisine, and 95 open-plan, indoor-outdoor rooms or apartments spilling into tropical gardens. Local-led tours of Grand Baie's lively village are on offer, taking in the Banana Café and the bazaar for souvenir shopping. Book by February 25 for better-than-half-price

stays before October, including four-person family apartments now costing from £155 per night B&B (veranda-resorts.com). Fly to Mauritius.

Costa Rican wildlife tour

Always wanted to go to Costa Rica? With space on regular departures until April 8, a two-week, wildlife-focused group tour packs in plenty of this sustainability-focused Central American country. Deep canyons, coffee plantations, perfectly pointy volcanoes and stunning shores all feature, along the way you'll whitewater raft, wobble along forest canopy walkways and go sloth-spotting in jungly, cacophonous national parks. Fourteen nights' B&B costs from £3,710pp, including flights, transport, activities and seven other meals, staying in mid-range or premium accommodation throughout (responsibletravel.com).