

Shamima Begum at risk of death, citizenship appeal told

From the [Telegraph](#)

Shamima Begum, the Isil bride, chose to go to Syria and can only blame “her own actions” if she is in danger, the Government said on Tuesday as it argued against her return to the UK.

The Bethnal Green schoolgirl fled to join the terror group when she was 15 with two other friends and married a Dutch fighter with whom she had three children.

Her re-emergence into the public eye prompted Sajid Javid, then Home Secretary, to [legal challenge launched by Ms Begum](#), now aged 20, reached the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in London, as her lawyers tried to get the decision ruled unlawful. A solicitor for her family, Tasnime Akunjee, has said that Ms Begum is a rape victim and had been brainwashed.

At the start of a four-day preliminary hearing Tom Hickman, QC, told Mrs Justice Elisabeth Laing that al-Roj, the refugee camp where Ms Begum now lives, was “wretched and squalid”.

All three of Ms Begum’s children have died, including Jarrah, who died of pneumonia less than three weeks after his birth in February. Mr Hickman said that the “tragic death” demonstrated the poor conditions.

In written submissions Ms Begum’s lawyers said that she had told UK media of her continued support for Islamic State because she feared for her safety and that of her unborn son while in a camp with other Isis members.

“The Bangladeshi government has made clear it will not allow the appellant to go to that country. It has said that if she arrived covertly she would be hanged,” the lawyers wrote.

Ms Begum was a student at Bethnal Green Academy when she left for Syria with her classmates Kadiza Sultana, 16, and Amira Abase, 15, in February 2015. They used stolen jewellery to fund flights to Istanbul and travelled to the Syrian border to be smuggled to Raqqa, which was the de facto Isis capital.

However, the Home Office rejected these claims in written submissions presented to the court and suggested Ms Begum’s current plight was her own fault. The argument, prepared by Jonathan Glasson QC, said: “It is relevant that the appellant is in Syria because of her own actions; and is detained in a camp run by the (Syrian Democratic Forces) as a direct consequence of her own actions; the Secretary of State has no role in the running of that camp; and no role in the decision of the SDF to detain the appellant there.

The Government claimed Ms Begum had “not presented any evidence” to show she was at risk of being deported to either Bangladesh or Iraq.

Mrs Justice Elisabeth Laing is expected to reserve her judgment at the end of the four-day preliminary hearing in London.

It is not expected to examine the “national security” allegations against Ms Begum this week, which may include claims, first reported by The Telegraph, that she was an enforcer in Isil’s morality police.