

'THEY'RE SAFE HERE'

Footballers granted asylum

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NATIONAL Council of Jewish Women Australia president Lynda Ben-Menashe has welcomed the Australian government's decision to grant asylum to seven Iranian women's football players.

"Australians can no longer pretend not to know what the Islamic regime does to Iranian women," Ben-Menashe said.

"It oppresses them, blinds them, rapes them, stones and murders them, in multiple, horrific ways. We are gratified that the Australian government is helping to protect these brave and defiant young women from one of those fates."

Early on Tuesday morning, Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke revealed that five players had been granted humanitarian visas and the same opportunity would be available to the rest of the team.

Two additional members of the team sought asylum before the rest of the group departed.

"The Iranian women's soccer team are welcome to stay in Australia, they're safe here and they should feel at home here," Burke said.

"They were moved to a safe location by the Australian Federal



Five members of the Iranian women's football team, pictured without their hijabs, with Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke. Photo: X

Police, and last night I met with them at that location."

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said officials had been preparing "for some time" and the Home Affairs Minister travelled to Queensland to arrange the move.

"Australians have been moved by the plight of these brave women," he said. "We're willing to provide assistance to other women in the team, noting that this is a very delicate situation, and it is up to them. But we say to them, if you want our help, help is here, and we will provide that."

Albanese revealed the situation was discussed during a 2am phone

call with US President Donald Trump, who then posted on Truth Social: "I just spoke to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, of Australia, concerning the Iranian National Women's Soccer Team. He's on it!"

"Some, however, feel they must go back because they are worried about the safety of their families."

In their opening match of the AFC Women's Asian Cup, members of the team remained silent during the Iranian national anthem prompting Iranian state media to publicly condemn the players, calling for them to be treated as traitors.