

American student freed in prisoner swap after spending three years in Iranian jail

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Highlight: This was the moment American Xiyue Wang became a free man, hugging an American diplomat on a tarmac in Switzerland after being held in an Iranian prison since 2016. The Chinese American had been charged with espionage. His family said he was there for graduate studies work.

Body

JOSE DIAZ-BALART (00:07:56): An American graduate student is on his way home tonight after being held in an Iranian prison for more than three years. His release, part of a high-profile prisoner swap. Ali Arouzi is in Tehran with the latest.

(Begin VT)

ALI AROUZI (NBC News Tehran Bureau Chief) (00:08:10): This was the moment American Xiyue Wang became a free man, hugging an American diplomat on a tarmac in Switzerland after being held in an Iranian prison since 2016. The Chinese American had been charged with espionage. His family said he was there for graduate studies work. On that same tarmac, the Iranians got back a scientist, Masoud Soleimani, arrested in the U.S. last year, accused of violating U.S. sanctions by attempting to export biological materials from the U.S. to Iran, returning today to a hero's welcome. The exchange brokered by the Swiss. In 2017, Wang faced those espionage charges on Iranian TV. His response delivered under apparent duress.

XIYUE WANG (00:08:57): The more knowledge the United States possessed about Iran, the better for its policy towards Iran.

ALI AROUZI (00:09:06): Today his family overjoyed, tweeting, "our family is complete once again. Our son Shaofan and I have waited three long years for this day." At least four other Americans remain detained or missing in Iran. Some of their families today expressing extreme disappointment, but clinging on to hope that their loved ones may be next.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP (00:09:26): I think it was a great thing for Iran. I think it was great to show that we can do something. It might have been a precursor as to what can be done.

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(End VT)

JOSE DIAZ-BALART (00:09:36): Ali Arouzi joins us now from Tehran. Ali, where is Wang right now?

ALI AROUZI (00:09:43): Well, Jose, tonight Wang is said to be in good condition, being treated at an American military base in Landstuhl, Germany.

JOSE DIAZ-BALART (00:09:51): Ali Arouzi in Tehran, thank you very much.

(00:09:53): We know more tonight about the three National Guard soldiers killed this week in a helicopter crash. Their Black Hawk went down on Thursday near St. Cloud, Minnesota. The cause under investigation. And today the guard remembering the men with this social media tribute, naming them. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Charles Nord, Sergeant Kort Plantenberg and Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Rogers Jr. The soldiers were part of a unit that had recently returned from a deployment in the Middle East.

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