

05/08/2018

"I SAID TO THE POLICE THAT I WAS A MUSLIM AND REFUSED TO TAKE OFF MY CLOTHES. BUT THEY SAID, 'NO PROBLEM' AND TOOK OFF ALL MY CLOTHES."

Date and time: August 5, 2018 00:00

Location: Forest close to Ilirska Bistrica, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.589254 , 14.451788

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 13 person(s), age: 10-47 , from: Afghanistan, Iran

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: kicking, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Slovenian police

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of 13 people, two families with children and two single men, all from Afghanistan and Iran, walked for ten days from Bihac (Bosnia-Herzegovina) to Slovenia. While crossing a forest close to Ilirska Bistrica (Slovenia), they were caught by the local police. One of the men told the police officers about their wish to apply for asylum in Slovenia, but the police answered:

Tomorrow deport, you can't stay here. Here is not Afghanistan or Iran.

Then, the Slovenian police stripped them all naked, including women and children, and searched their bodies.

I said to the police that I was a Muslim and refused to take off my clothes. But they said, 'No problem' and took off all my clothes. They forced me to take all my clothes off, and kept repeating to me: 'Picko Matre, Picko Matre'. The children were crying too much. After, the police told me and other women maybe five times or six times to take off our scarfs, but I did not want to. My son was scared and told me: 'Mum, please, remove your scarf because otherwise maybe they hit you'. I was crying. And the police removed the scarf from my head and threw it on the ground. It was very difficult for me. The policeman told me: 'This is the last time that you wore your scarf, here is not Afghanistan, here is Slovenia, here is no Islam!'

After that, all people were transported to a police station by car. One of the girls saw an UNHCR and IOM staff in the police station and thought that they would support them with the asylum procedures. But no one from the UNHCR neither from IOM communicated with them throughout the whole time they were in the police station. The families were only provided an Iranian translator who was questioning them about their names, nationalities, location of

entrance to Slovenia and intentions. The whole group spent one day in the Slovenian police station:

You know, my little sister she was crying because of the police. I did not understand their language. But she understood them because she went to the school in Serbia, which is similar language to Slovenian. She said to us that they [Slovenian police] were using bad words, when they kept shouting at us: 'jebem ti picko matre'. And my little sister was crying because of that.

The police took pictures of everyone, took their fingerprints, and the translator told them to sign a document that was written in Slovenian so that none of them understood it. When one of the girls asked the translator to explain what they were supposed to sign, he just told them to sign it and stop asking any questions. After that, the families and the men were taken to Croatia by car.

Police put all men into one car, very bad car. It was closed and there was no oxygen, so the men could not breath. Police was smiling in the car and laughing at the men that they could not breath properly and did not feel well. We were in that car for 5 hours.

In Croatia, all people were handed over to the Croatian police who directly deported them to the Bosnian border near Velika Kladuša and broke their phones by stealing the batteries and memory cards and destroying the charging stations:

I had all my memories from Iran in my phone, pictures of my mother who died, my sister, but I lost it all now. They took it and now we don't have any memory with our family in Afghanistan.

The police then told everyone to stand in a row and go back to Bosnia. The officers were kicking adults into their legs if they walked a bit out of that row. Once they crossed the border, the police stopped following them.