

02/11/2018

"THE ROOM WAS ABSOLUTELY PACKED WITH PEOPLE. IF I STAYED THERE ONE NIGHT, I WOULD DIE"

Date and time: November 2, 2018 23:00

Location: Near Suhor, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.48943226536151 , 14.777234112304654

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 13-30, one minor , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking

Police involved: Two authority units. First unit consisting of 4 officers in blue uniform, second unit wore face masks and black uniform

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of six , including one 13-year – old boy, traveled by foot from Bihać (BIH) to Croatia. T hey did n't have the intention to stay in Croatia and apply for asylum there , but rather wanted to pass through Croatia and Slovenia to Italy. The y wanted to cross a river at the Croatian-Slovenian border but due to its depth and fast current, they got scared of drowning and decided to walk back. On the way back, still nearby the border, they were stopped by a group of four Croatian officers.

When the y caught the six of them, they only asked them where they were heading to . After that, the officers talked between themselves in the Croatian, so the group did n't understand their conversation. The officers then started acting aggressively towards the people on the move and took their personal belongings :

"They started beating us. Their behavior was very bad. One young guy was very stupid, he was throwing our bags from a mountain, and we had everything in our bags. They threw it from the mountain. They were telling us rubbish things about our families, like mother fucker and things like this ."

They then told them that if they gave them all their money, they would set them free. Accordingly, the six of them handed the officers all of their money, €500 in total. The officers took the money and called for back up. Shortly after some officers dressed in black clothes and balaclavas arrived.

"Military police arrive. They are all black and look like soldiers."

One of them told the group of six to enter the van, without specifying what was going to happen to them next. When they were walking towards the van, the latter arrived officers were verbally attacking them, kicked them into

their legs and pushed them, so that one of the respondent's friends fell on the ground on his face. The car first took the group to a police station in a city, which they couldn't identify as the van had dark windows. When they arrived there, all of them were taken into a cell, where they were detained for several hours.

" Inside of room of the jail there was no air, you could not breath. The room was absolutely packed with people. If I stayed there one night, I would die. Absolutely closed and dangerous, there was no air, not possible to breath. They took our food, we had little bit of food in our bag, and water, but they took it and threw it outside".

After three hours, the officers dressed in black and with balaclavas returned to the cell and told the group to follow them. All twenty people on the move who had been detained in the same cell were told to enter a van and were then deported straight to the Bosnian border, without accessing any legal procedures. The journey to the border took around 3,5 hours.

Once they arrived, they were told to get off the van, one by one, and were then physically attacked by the same officers who had been transporting them:

" Military [Croatian police] were standing in two lines. And then, start hitting us while people running. They don't care, they hit into eyes, head, on the back, they don ' t care. There is nobody asking them questions or taking any action against them. They are beating humans like animals. They were beating us and laughing. They were kicking us and laughing, they were enjoying, like we were football ."

The 13-year-old boy was also attacked and had pain in his knee and legs. At the end of the interview, the respondent expressed his confusion about the officer's action towards people trying to reach asylum in the EU territory:

" I am completely confused why they were beating us. I understand that we are illegal, we are refugees, we are using their borders, and their land. But we don't want to hurt anyone. We don't want to stay in Croatia. Despite of that, I don't know why they are beating us. They don't have right to beat us. There are the rights we have, even animals have the rights and we are humans".