

23/03/2019

"PIČKA TI MATERINA! YOU ARE DOGS! WHY YOU CAME HERE? FUCK YOUR MOTHER! MOTHERFUCKERS! YOU ARE TERRORISTS!"

Date and time: March 23, 2019 22:00

Location: Modrus, Croatia, on a road 23 between Modrus and Jezerane

Coordinates: 45.097456, 15.210371

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 6 person(s), age: 17, 20-30, from: Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, electric shock, destruction of personal belongings

Police involved: Croatian police officers (in black uniforms, wearing caps and no masks): Apprehension by 2 men ("Policija" or "Police" written in the chest, a white van - Mercedes Sprinter - with the inscription "POLICIJA"). Transport by 3 men, at the border 3 men and 1 woman (2 police cars)

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

ORIGINAL REPORT

A group of six men started their journey from Bihac (BiH) on March 21, 2019. Around 6 pm, they crossed the border to Croatia by foot, west of Izacic (BiH). The following two days, they continued walking in Croatia without being detected by the police.

Around 10 pm on March 23, the group was at a distance of 30 or 40 km from the Slovenian border. Near the Croatian city of Modrus, they had to cross a road to continue their journey through the forest. The interviewees believe the place to have been at the approximate coordinates 45.097456, 15.210371. When they stepped on the dark road, a white van with the inscription "POLICIJA" arrived. The interviewees assume that the policemen had detected them by using a night-vision device. Two police men, wearing black uniforms saying "Policija" or "Police", got off of the van. They wore caps and their faces were unmasked.

One policeman pointed with an electric taser at the people on the move, the other one with a gun. The six men didn't run away. The policemen then started to insult them both in Croatian and in English:

"Pička ti materina! You are dogs! Why you came here?! Fuck your mother! Motherfuckers! You are terrorists!"

The people on the move did not say anything because they were too afraid.

"You can't say anything! We were afraid to say anything, we were afraid of taser."

The policemen then told them to kneel down in the snow, with the hands on their backs. The men had to stay in this position for a long time, an estimated half an hour. One of the policemen made a call, supposedly to a police station. After that, the policemen pushed them with their hands in the back, they fell on the ground and were lying in the snow, face down on their stomachs. They had to stay in this position for another estimated half an hour.

“ I almost couldn’t breathe because it was so cold.”

“ They did the same to our 17 years old friend although I explained to them that he was a minor.”

One of the men asked to seek asylum, however the policemen directly answered:

“ No, not in our country.”

The policemen asked the people on the move where they had started their journey.

“We told them we came from Bihac.”

One by one, the six men then had to get up, were searched and then brought into the back of a van. The policeman who searched them pushed them gruffly and punched each of them.

“ He punched some of us in the head, the others in the chest, and another one in the back.”

One of the respondents was beaten on his knee from a policeman using his electric taser like a baton to beat. The policeman beat the man’s knee so badly that he was still limping, having pain and having his knee bandaged by the time of the interview (i.e. some two weeks after the incident), as the photo shows:

The policemen didn’t find the money the men had hidden inside their belts. However, they took all four phones the group of six had with them (one Oppo phone of 150 Euros value, one Samsung G5 of 200 Euros value and two Huawei phones) as well as the chargers and power banks and put them into a bag.

In the van’s windowless backspace, the air conditioning was running on a very cold level.

“ They drove very fast, and braked very hard and made many curves to make us vomit. I felt worse than ever before in my life, my head was hurting and turning so much!”

There were seats in the van’s backspace but no seat belts.

“ I fell two or three times from my seat because of the head turning and the curves.”

The other five individuals also fell from their seats on the van’s floor, and all six men had to vomit. The men knocked on the van’s walls and shouted to stop the air conditioning, but the policemen didn’t answer.

After an estimated 90 minutes drive, the van stopped for ten to fifteen minutes. The respondents think this was in a larger city but are not sure as they weren’t allowed to leave the van. The first two policemen left the van and were replaced by three other policemen who were wearing the same black uniforms and caps.

One more estimated hour of driving under the same conditions followed.

It was still night, around 2 am on March 24, when the van stopped in the forest. There were already two other cars waiting. When the policemen opened the door, the group of six recognized three policemen and one policewoman who were probably wearing the same black uniforms. However, it was too dark to see their faces. The policewoman directly started to insult them, shouting in English:

"You motherfuckers, don't come again! Go now!"

One by one, they were told to leave the van. As soon as the addressed person got out, the policemen closed the doors, started to beat him with sticks and pushed him away from the car. The policewoman meanwhile continued to insult the individual. This procedure was repeated for each one, and whilst trying to avoid the beating, each of the men ran into a dried streambed around five meters from the van's backdoor. The respondent believes that the stream marks the border between Croatia and Bosnia at that spot.

The respondent who was the last to leave the van, reported that he was kicked in the back and stumbled down into the streambed. The police men threw the bag with the phones after him, but all phones had been crushed.

When the six people were crossing the streambed, the police officers were laughing and shouted at them to go back to Bosnia. The officers checked with a torch that the group didn't return.

Early on March 24, after an estimated hour or five kilometers of walking, the group reached Velika Kladusa (BiH). Even though the men had correctly declared to the Croatian police that they had entered Croatia near Bihac, they were thus pushed back at about 50 km distance from Bihac (roughly estimated location of the push back: coordinates 45.162418, 15.7647092).