

18/05/2019

"IF I TRY 100 TIMES AND THEY PUSH ME BACK, NO PROBLEM. IF I TRY 200 TIMES AND THEY PUSH ME BACK, NO PROBLEM."

Date and time: May 18, 2019 10:00

Location: Bileća Bus Station, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Coordinates: 42.856246 , 18.461178

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Montenegro

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 26, 28, 25, 40 years old , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: no violence used

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, no translator present, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

On May 17, a group of four Pakistani men traveled from Podgorica (MNE) to Nikšić (MNE) and took the bus from there to Vilusi (MNE). They arrived in Vilusi around 6:00PM and stayed there for two hours, waiting for darkness which would give them protection from being discovered by the authorities when they tried to cross the Bosnian-Montenegrin border. They left Vilusi around 8:00PM and walked all night until they reached the border and crossed near Deleuša (BiH) Border Crossing.

The group continued walking to Bileća (BiH) where they arrived around 10:00AM. By this time, several people in the group had become tired and they decided to go to the bus station in Bileća and try to take a bus to Sarajevo (BiH). The respondent, however, preferred to stay in the forest and avoid entering the village.

"I tell them: ticket is not good, walk, walk, walk is good, but they are crazy! I tell them this is not good, but no, they say, we get ticket, ticket is good, I tell them no good, this is not good, but they didn't listen to me!"

Despite the respondent's reluctance to enter the town, the group decided to try to buy bus tickets anyway. At 10:00AM on May 18, the group walked on a big street towards the bus station (see Fig. 1). Two local police officers (the respondent identified the Republika Srpska emblem on their blue uniforms) approached them by foot. The respondent described one officer as having black hair and the other officers as a bald headed man. Both of them were tall with blue eyes.

The officers casually asked the men where they were from. The respondent, having the best English skills in the group, replied that they are from Pakistan, they want to go to Sarajevo and ask for asylum. However, the police officers ordered the group to get into the police van. The respondent inferred that the officers did not seem to understand English at all.

"I said I want asylum, in Europe is my cousins, my friends, but they didn't understand."

The individuals were brought to a point near the Bosnian/Montenegrin border (See Fig. 2) and told with gestures to go

back and not return.

“But I don’t listen to them, I waited there for three hours and then came back again.”

After waiting three hours, the group walked for two hours on a small paved road. Around 3:00PM on May 18, three police officers saw them and approached them by foot. Once again, the respondent explained that they were from Pakistan, on their way to Sarajevo and they want to apply for international protection there in the camp.

The respondent reported that the police said:

“This is border area, you must reach Sarajevo and there is a camp, you can ask for asylum there. But here is no camp, this is border area. You sit down here!”

The respondent described one of the officers as “very angry”, but he clarified that the second group of officers spoke very politely, more politely than the officers the group had encountered before. The police called other officers and after two hours of waiting a police vehicle arrived. The whole group was brought to the Immigration Office in Trebinje (BiH) where the authorities asked them for papers, but the group claimed to not have papers.

“We had papers from registration in Montenegro, but before in the forest, we tore them up and threw them away in order to avoid being deported back to Montenegro.”

The authorities did not ask the group any further questions individuals weren’t asked any further questions and were told to take the bus back to Montenegro the next day at their own expense. They spent the night in the police office in Trebinje where they had to sleep on the floor with blankets provided by the officers. They had access to toilets but were not given food nor water even though they had asked for it.

“I tell them: Give me food, I am hungry, but they didn’t give me.”

The next morning, May 19 at 9:00AM, one officer from the Immigration Office and four police officers which the respondent estimated as local police escorted the group to the bus station in Trebinje from where they took the bus back to Nikšić (MNE). The authorities talked to the bus driver before so they were not checked at the border checkpoint and just allowed to cross. From Nikšić, they took the bus back to Konik Camp in Podgorica (MNE).

Fig. 1: The point where the group as stopped by the 2 local police officers

Fig. 2: The point where the group was pushed back to the first time