

21/08/2018

"THEY KICKED INTO OUR BACK, NECK AND LEGS - THEY FRACTURED MY HAND WITH THEIR FOOT"

Date and time: August 21, 2018 16:00

Location: Near Črnomelj, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.56309250591816 , 15.153831017353696

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: unknown , from: Iran

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: kicking, pushing people to the ground, exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Six women police and 7 men (Slovenian). Few had blond hair, and all wearing blue shirts.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: fingerprints taken, photos taken, personal information taken, papers signed, no translator present

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The main interviewee for the account of this incident, was the 17 year old son of the family involved.

The whole family started walking from Bosnia, crossed Croatia and wanted to continue to Slovenia, where they wished to apply for asylum. After six days of walking, predominantly through forests and mountain terrains, the whole family crossed the Croatian-Slovenian border. Around fifteen kilometres from the border, the family was walking in a forest close to the town called Črnomelj where they were seen by a man on a motorbike, who called the police. The family noticed the man calling the police and wanted to escape but the local people surrounded them and did not let them leave until the police arrived.

The interviewee explained that soon after, six female and seven male police officers wearing blue shirts arrived. The family experienced that the police would not listen to them, and they were not allowed to explain their situation. The interviewee explained that he initially told the police that they were from Syria and not from Iran, because he was worried that they would have labelled them and treated them as "illegal migrants" and not "refugees". The police officers told the family to lie on the ground and searched their bodies. They found 1000 euros hidden in the mothers underwear (bra), took the money and did not return it. One officer told the son to tell him the pin code for the phone, so that he could search through the phone. When the son refused to do so, the officer physically attacked him, and after started attacking his mother and father also:

They put us to the ground and they were kicking into me. But not only into me, but also my mother and father. Into our back and neck and legs. They said not to speak. They fractured my hand with their foot [kicks] .

After the physical attacks, the whole family was transported to a police station. The son told the police that he had a lot of pain in his arm caused by the attack by the police officers that happened a few minutes before and asked the officers if he could seek medical treatment. The son was then transported to the hospital in Vinica, where he was treated by a local doctor. The doctor diagnosed Darius with a fractured front arm and gave him a provisional hand split and bandage, but did not provide him with a medical report. After that, the son was transported back to the police station where his parents had been detained.

At the police station, the officers took the fingerprints of all family members, photographed them, and asked them to fill a document with their names, age, nationality and their intentions in Slovenia (which was written in the Farsi language). The son explained to the police that him and his family wanted to apply for asylum in Ljubljana and asked the police whether he and his parents could access the asylum procedures. The police called an Arabic translator to help the family to understand their questions, but the family told them that their mother tongue was Farsi and not Arabic. The son explained that he had limited understanding of the Arabic language and could not speak Arabic. For this reason, none of the family members understood the Arabic translator properly, which made their legal procedure impossible to understand and complete. Afterwards, the police gave the family a paper to sign that they did not understand:

We signed some paper. But they did not let us read it. They just put it in front of us and told us to sign it very fast and afterwards they took it back. We did not even read it. First, they brought some papers in Farsi, name, first name, last name. But the papers we signed we did not know what it was. And after they deported us to Croatia

The family was deported first to Croatia and then from Croatia to Bosnia. The transport was difficult, the mother stated that the van in which they were being deported did not have any windows or a fan, so the inside was very hot and they had difficulties breathing. The Croatian police stopped on the way to have lunch and left the family waiting for three hours in the van. According to all family members, the Croatian police otherwise treated them with respect, did not steal or destroy any of their possessions, and did not physically or verbally attack them. The Croatian police only drove the family to the Bosnian border, around 20 kilometres away from Velika Kladuša, where they told them to walk back to Bosnian territory.

The 17 year old son, was treated in the hospital in Vinica by the local doctor who concluded that he had a fractured arm (photo 1). The doctor gave him a provisional hand split and bandaged his arm but did not provide him with a medical report.

The mother had pain in her neck, back, and leg caused by the physical attack by a Slovenian police officer. She had a visible bruise on her left knee caused by several kicks by the Slovenian officers (photo 2).

The father had several bruises on his right ankle from the assault by the police officers (several kicks – photo 3).

For an interesting correspondence with the Slovenian police about this report, click here:
<https://www.borderviolence.eu/a-letter-from-the-slovenian-police/>