

22/04/2019

"MORE DAYS WALKING MEANS MORE FOOD, LESS TIME USING THE POWER BANKS."

Date and time: April 22, 2019 07:30

Location: Ribnica, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.748765 , 14.736576

Push-back from: Slovenia

Push-back to: Croatia, Bosnia

Demographics: 5 person(s), age: 24-40 , from: Morocco, Eritrea, Egypt

Minors involved? No

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

Police involved: 1 Slovenian police man and 1 police woman with blue uniforms, 2 Slovenian police vans, 1 Slovenian police interrogator with Arabic translator, 4 Croatian police officers with black uniforms, 1 Croatian police van

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, papers signed, denial of food/water, personal information take

The group of five men started their journey at 5 am from the city of Sturlic. After passing the first mountain, one of the individuals decided to return, because he couldn't deal with his tiredness. The group walked as fast as they could, sometimes sleeping only two hours per night. "More days walking means more food, less time using the power banks." After four days walking through Croatia, they reached the Slovenian border. To cross it they had to pass a bridge over a river which was at that moment guarded by the authorities. They ran back into the forest and decided to hide there for the night, waiting for the right moment to pass. At 4.30 am, they returned to the bridge, crawling through the forest. They made it to the Slovenian side and continued walking till 6.30 pm. At that time, they were around 12 km away from the city of Ribnica. "We want to cross the city at dawn, we want reduce the risk that police catch us." So they decided to sleep in the forest till 1.00 am to continue their walk after. At 5.00 am, they reached the bus station of Ribnica and bought tickets to Ljubljana. Therefore, they went in pairs and in intervals of 1,5 hours, to stay undetected. As all shops and cafes were closed in the city at this time, the group returned to the forest to hide there while waiting for the bus. Around 7.30 am, a non-assignable police car passed by, and stopped a little further, waiting for their reaction. Some minutes later, a police man and a police woman walked to the people on the move. The officers asked for their passports and when the individuals explained that they don't have any, the officers asked for their reason being in Slovenia. "I said we are refugees we want to take a bus to Ljubljana, and they said because of this we need to go to the police station." At the police station, the individuals were interrogated with the help of an Arabic translator. They were asked for their names, nationalities, ages and also for their reasons to have left their home countries and how much it costed them in total to get to Slovenia. After the interrogation, the group was taken to the jail. "We stay all night with no food." At the next morning, around 10.30 am, the officers brought the group to a police van with three other individuals and handed them over to the Croatian authorities. At the border area, the authorities took photos of their faces. Once they were inside Croatia, the group switched to a Croatian police van with three more people on the move inside. They were left in the van for more than an hour in front of the station while the officers went inside with their phones and power banks. When they finally returned, they handed over their belongings, but all were destroyed. When the respondent asked for the money the Slovenian authorities had previously confiscated, they just answered that they wouldn't have any. The officers drove the group in a four-hour drive to the Croatian/Bosnian border near Glinica. At 5.00 pm, they were told to get off the van and walked back three hours to Velika Kladusa.

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of five men started their journey at around 5:00 am on the 17th of April from the city of Sturlic. After passing a first mountain, one of the individuals decided to return, because he could not deal with his tiredness. For several days, the group walked as fast as they could, sometimes sleeping only two hours per night.

"More days walking means more food, less time using the power banks."

After several days walking through Croatia, they reached the Slovenian border. . At around 4:30 am on April 21st, they group crossed over to the Slovenian side and continued walking until around 6:30 pm. At that time, they were around 12 km away from the city of Ribinica.

"We want to cross the city at dawn, we want reduce the risk that police catch us."

They decided to sleep in the forest until 1:00 am (March 22nd)) to continue their walk after. At 5:00 am, they reached the bus station of Ribinica and bought tickets to Ljubljana. They went in pairs and in intervals of 1.5 hours, to stay undetected.

Since the shops and cafes were closed in the city at this time, the group returned to the forest to hide while waiting for the bus. At around 7:30 am, a police car passed by, and stopped a little further, waiting for their reaction. Some minutes later, a police man and a police woman walked up to the group. The officers asked for their passports and when the individuals explained that they did not have any, the officers asked for their reason being in Slovenia.

"I said we are refugees we want to take a bus to Ljubljana, and they said because of this we need to go to the police station."

At the police station, the individuals were interrogated with the help of an Arabic translator. They were asked for their names, nationalities, ages and also for their reasons to have left their home countries and how much it costed them in total to get to Slovenia. After the interrogation, the group was taken to the jail.

"We stay all night with no food."

The next morning, April 23rd, at around 10:30 am, the officers brought the group to a police van with three other individuals and handed them over to the Croatian authorities. At the border area, the authorities took photos of their faces. Once they were inside Croatia, the group switched to a Croatian police van with three more people on the move inside. They were left in the van for more than an hour in front of the station while the officers went inside with their phones and power banks. When they finally returned, they handed over their belongings which were destroyed. When the respondent asked for the money the Slovenian authorities had previously confiscated, they just answered that they would not have any.

The Croatian officers drove the group for four hours to the Croatian/Bosnian border near Glinica. At 5:00 pm, they were told to get off the van and walked back three hours to Velika Kladuša.