

21/02/2018

"THE OFFICERS TOLD HIM THAT IF HE TRIES TO CROSS THE BORDER AGAIN, THEY WOULD KILL HIM"

Date and time: February 21, 2018 23:00

Location: Close to Batina, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.8286690894168 , 18.83766914597163

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 22 person(s), age: 20-30 , from: Pakistan

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: Croatian police officers

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

On February 21st. 2018 in the evening, 22 men (from Pakistan, all about 20-30 years old) walked from Sombor, Serbia towards Croatia and crossed the Serbian-Croatian border. They were moving through Croatian territory towards Hungary, with guidance from a man (originally from Afghanistan but now citizen of Serbia). The group crossed a river and continued walking for about five minutes before getting caught by Croatian police officers at around 11 pm. The interviewee didn't know the way and he thus couldn't describe the place in detail, but apparently the river was a smaller branch of the Danube river and they were moving on the Croatian side.

The men did not express any intentions to seek asylum. After stopping the men, the officers searched their bodies and belongings, and further checked all their mobile phones. The officers looked through pictures, messages and contacts saved in their mobile phones. The interviewee was the only one who spoke English, so the officers accused him of being 'the boss', meaning a smuggler, and thus treated him worse than the others. The man denied this and tried to explain that he had only been in Serbia for a month and thus couldn't be a smuggler, but the officers didn't believe him.

The officers broke their phones, pouring water over them and tearing out a piece of the phone. Next they were taken into a room in a building close by, where some of the officers violently attacked the men. The police officers beat them with hands and a stick, and kicked them. The officers still accused the interviewee of being a smuggler, and thus beat and kicked him more severely, especially beating his legs. Afterwards, his knee was badly injured, so that it was swollen and painful, he couldn't walk properly and was limping for several days.

After the incident the men were transported by car to the Croatian-Serbian border, where the officers made the men stay inside the car for the rest of the night, about 12 hours, until they were released the next morning on the 22nd. of February. The officers then took pictures of the men and wrote down their personal details, but did not give them any written documents or take any fingerprints. After that the men were ordered to go back to Serbia, and the officers told

the interviewee that if he tries to cross the border again, they would kill him, and the men returned to the Serbian side.