

16/04/2019

"THIS IS MENTAL TORTURE!"

Date and time: April 16, 2019 10:30

Location: Breznik, Slovenia

Coordinates: 45.2247 , 15.9628

Push-back from: Slovenia, Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 22-48 , from: Pakistan, India

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, insulting, electric shock, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, pointing at people with guns, reckless driving, repeatedly abrupt stopping, causing vomiting

Police involved: first attempt: some Bosnian officers, number unknown. Second attempt: 3 Slovenian officers in camouflage uniform with balaclavas and three dogs, carrying big machine guns with red colored laser pointers on the rifle, carrying also knives and pistols on their belts. They had extra bags on their thighs and large boots. Afterwards seven Croatian officers in dark blue uniforms. In the end eight police officers with balaclavas, batons, guns and electric shockers.

Taken to a police station?: no

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

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of nine started moving in the afternoon on April 4, 2019, from Bihać towards the Croatian border. When they made a little break on the way, some Bosnian officers came towards them, insulting them and kicking their water bottles away. They forced them to go return to Bihać.

Despite this incident, the group went on game again early in the morning at 5 am on April 6.

After six days they ran out of food and started drinking only water. On April 12, they finally they reached the Kupa river at the Slovenian-Croatian border. They describe it as a very dangerous river, but when they walked inside this time, the water only reached their necks

"I know that many people died in this river. Too many people died, I know from five persons in the last months. There is never anything about that in the news, they are refugee people, who cares? They think we are animals."

After the nine of them crossed the river successfully, they continued walking through the Slovenian forests for three days. When they were sleeping in the forest early in the morning on April 15, three Slovenian police officers in camouflage uniform with balaclavas and three dogs came and started to kick them with their feet, shouting:

"Police! Wake up! Put your hands up!"

They carried big machine guns with red colored laser pointers on the rifle, which they pointed directly on the chests of the individuals, threatening them to shoot. They further carried knives with them and pistols on their belts, extra bags on their thighs and large boots.

The officers walked with the people on the move for three hours to the next road and then drove them with a car back to the Slovenian/Croatian border. Once arrived there, they handed them over to seven Croatian police officers in dark blue uniforms.

They brought them into a room, but no police station, where they detained them for some time. Although the individuals asked for food, they didn't get any. They took neither any photos nor fingerprints, and didn't make them sign any papers. What they took though were all their belongings, such as phones, money, power banks, after having searched them, even their underwear. One officer put everything in a bag and went to a wagon car. He placed the bag in the door and smashed the car's door five times strongly on the bag and destroyed everything inside.

"This is mental torture!"

After they had asked them where they came from, and the individuals explained that they came from Bihać, they brought them close to Velika Kladuša. On the way to the Croatian/Bosnian border, they stopped at one point and another individual on the move entered the van, so they were now altogether 10 people. They were driven fast for four hours on mountain roads, from time to time stopping abruptly so that the individuals hit the walls and each other. Some people also had to throw up.

"After 10 days of walking, with only a little bit of bread and water, how do you look like? And then they put you with 20 other persons in a small car. This is too much."

"Three days ago [April 14], our friends were pushed back by Croatian police. They were 22 people in the car, in a small van for two days, cold, no food, no possibility to sit, to sleep, they said: 'Sorry we need go to toilet for washing, we are hungry, we need doctor', but no, when we asked, too much shouting, and they locked the door of the car. It's like torture."

When they reached the Croatian/Bosnian border, the car stopped and the police officers shouted:

"Out!"

"If you go quick out and run, then you are safe but if you fall down, they beat and kick you so long, till you cross the border."

It was about eight police officers with balaclavas, batons, guns and electric shockers standing in two rows, who forced them to walk towards the border. They beat all of them.

"They only beat you on the body, they know, they don't want that there are visible scars or black and blue marks."

Afterwards, they followed them for 30 minutes until they crossed the Bosnian border and the ten of them ran away quickly.

It was 10.30 am on April 16 when they arrived at the border. They walked about five hours to Velika Kladuša and reached Bihać after 15 hours at 2 am the next morning.

"When we were at the Slovenia/Croatian border, they just told us to go back and even gave us the bag with our stuff back. But the Croatian/Bosnian border is not good. So much torture."

Coordinates of Capture: 45.5131, 15.1114