

Abduweli Ayup

Male - Uyghur

I am Abduweli Ayup. I was born in Kashgar city in 1973. I am currently residing in Turkey. I was arrested in August 19th, 2013 by the local Chinese State security police, because I promoted linguistic rights of Uyghur people through my online writings and opening a mother language kindergarten in Kashgar. I was arrested when I was planning to open Uyghur mother language kindergarten in Urumchi and Khoten. I was freed on the 20th November 2014. On my release I found employment in an English Training Center in Kashgar. But my students became less and less because of my “criminal” background and police pressure. My friends and relatives also felt terrified about contacting me. In Kashgar the police always stopped me to check my ID, because I have experienced terrible torture during my time of detention and imprisonment, I was always terrified whenever I saw a police uniform.

Every time on checking my ID, the police would identify me by my “criminal record” and treat me badly. After being freed from the jail, I was arrested two times because of my “criminal record”. First time was in December 2014, they placed me in a cell for approximately four hours. I was ordered to clean the stools away in the toilet in order to humiliate me. The second time was on the 7th July 2015. A police SWAT (special police in Chinese) team knocked me down, slapped and kicked me for about half an hour before taking me to custody having me thrown into a cell for about six hours. Since the last arrest I could not sleep at night, as I always felt nervous about being arrested again.

On the 25th August 2015, I was forced to leave Kashgar, as the police gave me a warning about renting an apartment in the city. This is how I lost the chance to live in my home city, and that is why I decided to leave the country.

When I was arrested, my arms were twisted behind my back and I was handcuffed, at the same time a hood placed over my head before I was thrown into a police van. First, I was taken to a police station where I was forced to sit on what was called ‘a Tiger Chair’.

My ankles, wrists and my neck were secured to the chair by chains before my interrogation commenced. During the questioning they hit the palms of my hands while threatening me to admit that I have committed the crimes that they accused me of. Regardless of the beatings and threats I refused to admit anything. I was then taken to a detention centre at around 9:00 pm by three of the men who arrested me. First, I was taken to a hall, where they stripped me naked, there were approximately 20 convicted criminals working there whose crimes were murder, serious robbery, etc. Once I had been stripped naked, they encircled me and attacked me. Then I was thrown into a cubical type cell in which you could not stand up but only move in crouch position. There was an open toilet which give off a putrid smell that was unbearable.

The next day I was transported to Urumqi, arriving at around 9:00 pm, the same procedure of interrogation took place, secured to a tiger chair, beatings of the hands and shoulders and threatening verbal interrogation. After this ordeal, I was taken to a hospital. As I had a hood placed over my head, I don't know which hospital it was. I know they carried out a full body check, X-ray, taking saliva, urine, and blood samples, applying a cold gel before examining different body organs. After which I was then taken to Tengritagh detention centre, I was beaten up on arrival before being placed in a cell. The cell was small and constructed of glass, the detention term for this was called 3D watch, where I was beaten once more.

There were about 20 Uyghur inmates, of whom including myself the three of us were political prisoners. In the Tengritagh detention centre 60% were Uyghurs, 40% were Chinese.

The questions I were asked during my interrogation were: "Why did you return from the USA? Which organisation send you here? What relationship do you have with Uyghur organisations and other international organisations?" The main question that was repeatedly asked was "who sent you from the USA here?"

While in the Tengritagh detention centre, I never shared a cell with anyone who had been sentenced to death, but after I was transferred to Liu Da Wan Prison on the 10th September, in around November, I shared a cell with a Uyghur man called Abdurahman from Ghulja who was sentenced to death. Later I was moved to a different cell. I learned from others that he was executed in December and buried by the authorities in Gulsay Graveyard, his body wasn't returned to his family. I heard that about one month later his family wanted to plant some flowers around his grave, they were told that they didn't have permission to disturb the soil around his grave for one year. I suspect that his organs must have been removed.

Their family were only allowed to see his face before his burial, when they asked to wash his body, they were not given permission. I believe the authorities prevented them from seeing his body as they had a lot to hide. I am also aware that two other Uyghurs were executed, according to others who knew of their execution, the procedure after death was exactly the same. After the execution, the families were only allowed to see their faces, they were not allowed to wash their bodies before burial. That was the common practice at that time.