

CHINA: Roundtable discussion at the European Parliament about religious freedom (video)

On the occasion of Human Rights Day (10 December), Human Rights Without Frontiers (HRWF) in collaboration with EU Reporter has held a roundtable discussion at the European Parliament about religious freedom in China. China is regarded as one of the worst offenders of this human right as one million Uyghur Muslims are in re-education camps, crosses have been removed from the top of Catholic churches, Protestants are under heavy pressure and are often put in prison, over 1,200 Church of Almighty God members are now in prison, and more than 2,000 Falun Gong practitioners are now in prison (see database of prisoners here). Furthermore, all believers who are arrested often face physical and mental torture and are forced to recant their faith if they want to get released.

Human Rights Without Frontiers calls upon China

- to put an end to the detention of Uyghur Muslims and believers of all faiths in re-education camps;
- to respect its international obligations concerning freedom of religion or belief;

Human Rights Without Frontiers calls upon the international community, including the European Union,

- to press China to respect the individual right to have a religion, to manifest one's religion in public and in private, to create religious associations, to peacefully worship and assemble for religious purposes;

- to grant political asylum to any Chinese citizen persecuted in his country because of his/her faith and not to deport them back to China.

Program of the video (about 25 minutes)

MEP Zdechovsky (EPP): 00.00 – 09.05
Lea Perekrests (HRWF): 11.00 – 12.45
Willy Fautre (HRWF): 12.45 – 16.00
Dr Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy: 16.05 – 22.00
Lea Perekrests (HRWF): 22.00 – 23.00
Dr Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy: 23.00 – 25.14
Willy Fautre (HRWF): 25.14 – 25.35

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CHINA: Yingye'er re-education camp managed like prison

(video)

New exclusive video details internal management regulations of the Yingye'er "transformation through education" camp in Xinjiang. Experts confirm that the rules are almost identical to those of a prison.

By Massimo Introvigne

Bitter Winter (11.12.2018) – <https://bit.ly/2SLeFyZ> – At the end of November, Bitter Winter posted an exclusive video about the large-scale Yingye'er "transformation through education" camp for Uyghurs in Yining city of Xinjiang. The video has drawn a lot of attention throughout the world. We now present another video about the same camp, detailing its internal management rules and regulation.

The rules and regulations are posted on public signboards displayed in the corridors of the camp and detail a variety of internal management issues, such as the security of the camp, the code of conduct of "students" and personnel, as well as provisions regarding the inmates' communication with families. According to public security personnel, some of these rules and regulations are almost identical to the management regulations of prisons.

The instructions regarding the security of the camp state, "The section needs to make overall arrangements of armed

police officers, public security personnel, security guards, and other forces.” In fact, armed police officers and public security personnel are part of the state security forces. So, if Yingye’er camp were an ordinary vocational school, the daily routine of providing safety would only require regular security guards.

The “Code of Conduct” for ‘students,’” posted on the “class affairs board” in the corridor, contains 26 regulations. Among these, article 23 is especially worth mentioning: it requires “students” to address armed police and special police as “police officers” and address teaching cadres as “training officers.” The requirement is notably similar to the code of conduct used for prison inmates.

One of the responsibilities for teachers requires them to “strive hard to study Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao’s thought,” “adhere to the Party’s basic line,” and teach students a “proletarian philosophy.”

As per the regulations, the responsibilities of the headmaster and Mandarin Chinese teachers include the indoctrination of students through ideological and political education. The rules state that, basically, only the students who speak Uyghur are required to learn Mandarin.

In a recent interview with Bitter Winter, an employee of another “transformation through education” camp revealed that all Uyghur detainees are forced to learn Chinese. “But even if an Uyghur manages to get a perfect score in Chinese, he or she will not be allowed to leave the camp,” revealed the employee.

The regulations of the Yingye'er camp include detailed provisions regarding contacts between "students" and their families, which are extremely restrictive. Phone calls between them must be applied for and approved, and the length of each phone call is usually limited to under five minutes. The rules require that phone calls must be "personally registered, personally dialed, and personally monitored" by members of the staff. The use of "code words and secret language" during conversations is prohibited. Inmates who do not comply with these rules will be punished with deprivation of family phone call privileges from one to six months based, depending on a situation.

Article 1 of the regulations states that "anti-extremism" should be incorporated within the content of "heart-to-heart chats," and emphasizes that through such chats, "staff should gain a multifaceted understanding of students' ideological dynamics and strive to discover emerging and tendentious intelligence information and clues."

Our reporter has also discovered a room with a sign on the door "zhēnbié shì (Screening Room)." The original meaning of the Chinese word zhēnbié (screening) is "to differentiate and distinguish," which emphasizes carrying out the assessment, examination, identification, and verification cautiously and seriously.

One of the most probable explanations for the function of this screening room could also lie in the interview with the employee of another "transformation through education" camp, mentioned earlier. He states that all detainees are divided into four levels of supervision: lenient, ordinary, strict, and enforced. According to him, special teams regularly screen

“students” to determine whether they have signed a statement of repentance and “admitted their guilt.” An assessment is then conducted, and students who do not pass are sent to a detention center. Therefore, most probably, the screening room at the Yingye’er camp is used to evaluate the degree of “transformation” and “reform” of students.

Although CCP’s propaganda strives to conceal the truth, a growing body of evidence shows that the CCP authorities are carrying out large-scale persecution and suppression of Muslim Uyghurs. In its external communications, the CCP refers to “transformation through education” camps as “schools.” The factual materials our reporter has collected confirm that in terms of both internal structure and management regulations, this “transformation through education” camp is, in fact, a prison.

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CHINA: Camps for Uyghurs, “schools” or jails? Exclusive report, photos, and footage from Bitter Winter

While China tries to defend the indefensible claiming that the transformation through education camps are benign “schools,” one of our reporters secretly visited the new large camp in Yining, Xinjiang, and proved it is undoubtedly a jail.

Watch the video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2PT-RXxcT8>

By Li Zaili

Bitter Winter (12.11.2018) – <https://bit.ly/2T5dgEe>



Exterior view of the re-education camp in Huocheng county

On November 6, the United Nations Human Rights Council conducted its Universal Periodic Review of China. Several countries denounced the transformation through education camps, particularly those for Uyghurs in Xinjiang, as places where the inmates are subjected to psychological pressure, inhumane treatments, and torture. China answered that they are simply “educational” facilities. Bitter Winter has repeatedly documented that this is not the case, and is now in a position to offer unpublished news, images, and footages.

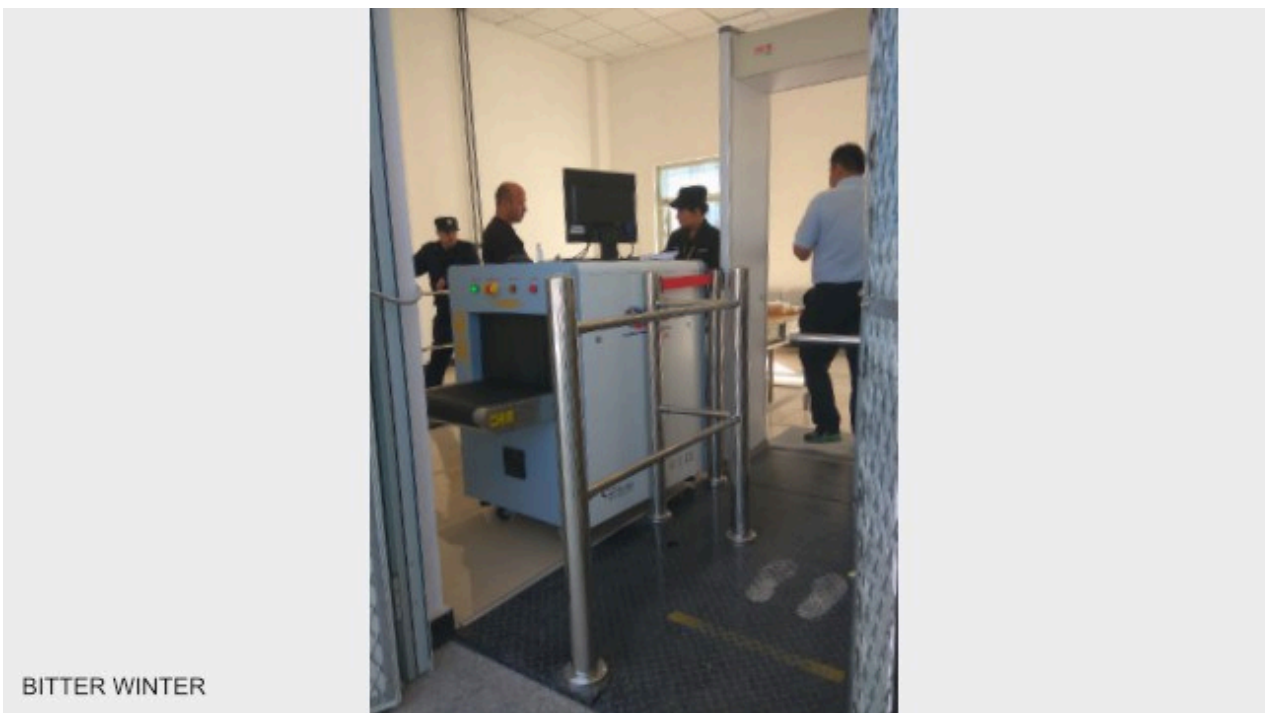


Vehicles entering the re-education camp must pass through two gates



The detainees' family members who are attending the public trial meeting line up outside the re-education camp, waiting to be summoned.

In May of this year, authorities in Xinjiang began to build a large-scale “transformation through education” camp in place of a lumber mill and a free market for buying and selling cattle and sheep, in the city of Yining, Huocheng county. In three months, the construction of this camp was basically completed, covering an area of about 100,000 square meters.



A family member undergoes a security check.

In August, the construction of this camp was in its final stages. When conducting a secret visit inside the camp, one of our reporters discovered that there are altogether nine buildings, where “students,” are detained, surrounded by barbed-wire fences. Each building is four floors high, and each floor has 27 rooms (dormitories) and three “classrooms.” All the dormitories and “classrooms” are fitted with double iron doors, and iron bars have been installed on all the windows. The facility’s structure is obviously very much

similar to that of a prison.



Police patrol and stand guard outside the re-education camp.

A construction worker revealed that most people who would be locked up there, in fact, received prison sentences; some of them were sentenced to five or six years. He also emphasized that the camp was really tantamount to a prison, with little hope for the inmates to be let out or escape.



A large-scale production base has been built adjacent to the re-education camp.

In September, Uyghurs were already being locked up one after the other in the camp. On September 7, the authorities held a public trial of the detainees there. The camp is now heavily-guarded, with 15 high-definition cameras near the entrance alone. There are also armed police officers guarding the entrance. Vehicles entering the camp must pass through two gateways, and can only enter after passing a security check.



Inside the base, there is a building named “Practical Training Base Service Center.”

Besides, adjacent to the camp, there is also a large production base that contains nine factories, including a clothing factory, an electronics factory, and a food processing plant. One of the factory managers confirmed that the “students” detained in the camp are sent there for forced work, something Bitter Winter has repeatedly documented in similar cases. Not only are the transformation through education camps jails, but inmates are also subject to forced labor.



“Chuangfa Innovative Electronics” is written on the wall of one of the factories.



Machines and equipment have already been installed in the factory.



Workers adjust and test machines in a factory.

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CHINA: Chinese police detain Kazakhs with overseas ties, send them for 're-education'

By Qiao Long, translated by Luisetta Mudie

RFA (30.10.2017) – <http://bit.ly/2z0MqWQ> – Chinese authorities in the northwestern region of Xinjiang are continuing to detain ethnic minority Kazakhs, sending them to police-run detention centers or re-education camps” across the region, sources told RFA.

Those being targeted often have overseas links, including a history of overseas study or family and friends across the border in Kazakhstan, they said.

Among those detained was Dalyat Jaynar, 27, a student from Qutubi county, in Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture who was detained this summer at the Jeminay border checkpoint on returning to China after studying in Kazakhstan.

“Dalyat was traveling back to China on July 17 via the Jeminay border crossing, and was detained by police on the grounds that she had spent longer than 6 months in Kazakhstan,” a source in Kazakhstan told RFA on Monday.

Dalyat’s fiance confirmed the report, saying she had been taken to a “vocational training center.”

But he declined to give further details. “She is studying in China,” he said.

A second Kazakh source said the village party secretary of his birthplace in China was recently imprisoned for writings—including poems—on the topic of Kazakhstan’s history and national identity.

“The head of Mabai village in Dolat township, who is a poet, was found to have a number of poems about Kazakhstan’s history stored in his cell phone,” the source said. “There were also some lyrical songs on Kazakhstan’s history.”

‘Anger engulfing the heavens’

Meanwhile, Altanbek Sagandahar, 30, of Karzhao village in Jeminay county has been held under criminal detention since April at an unknown location.

He was detained after penning a poem about “anger engulfing the heavens,” about the ruling Chinese Communist Party’s treatment of ethnic Kazakhs in China.

“My ethnicity [as a Kazakh] is more important than anything,” he had written. “Don’t be fooled if we seem fairly prosperous ... future generations could lose their faith; stop propelling us towards extinction.”

And a Kazakh source in Zhaosu county in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture said a young man, Muheit Akbar, who is in his early twenties, was detained for helping a returning ethnic Kazakh to obtain a sim card.

“He helped a friend who returned from Kazakhstan to get a sim card for his cell phone,” the source said. “He was detained, released, and then detained again. He is in prison now.”

The source said a 21-year-old ethnic Kazakh from the area, Aray, was held for time in a “re-education center.”

“After he got out not long ago ... he left Xinjiang and now he’s in Kazakhstan,” the source said.

Meanwhile, authorities in Fuyun, in Xinjiang’s Altay prefecture, have detained a student and his entire family after he was forcibly repatriated while studying in Egypt, an unnamed Kazakh source told RFA.

Bagdad Aken was detained alongside three other members of his family by state security police at Urumqi's international airport, the source said.

"It was because he went to Egypt. They detained all four of them," the source said. "The police had promised that he would be released if he came back from Egypt."

"But shortly after that, the state prosecutor's office was saying that he would likely get seven years' imprisonment," he said.

Region-wide wave of minority detentions

The move follows a region-wide wave of detentions of ethnic minorities – including Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Kirgыз – who have any kind of overseas ties.

A Kazakh source in Qinghe county said the policy is being dubbed a "localization" policy by Chinese officials.

"There aren't even any letters being sent out on headed notepaper," the source said. "They come over [to Kazakhstan] when they're retired, but then they get a directive saying that their pensions will be cut if they don't return to China immediately."

Students told RFA they are now too worried to return home, for fear that they won't be allowed to leave again.

Chinese authorities are also believed to be holding a number of ethnic minority Kazakhs for wearing "Islamic" clothing and praying, a practice forbidden by the ruling Chinese Communist Party on university campuses across the country.

Dozens of Kazakhs have also faced detention, intimidation, and the confiscation of their passports and other documents because they have family members living or studying overseas.

Ethnic minority Kazakh Muslims were among some 200 ethnic

minority holders of Chinese passports targeted in August by Egypt's secret police in an operation activists said was requested by Beijing.

The 200 students, many of them religious students at Cairo's Al-Azhar Islamic University, were detained in a crackdown that began on July 4, and were rounded up in restaurants or at their homes, with others seized at airports as they tried to flee to safer countries, sources told RFA's Uyghur Service at the time.

Official figures show that there are around 1.5 million Kazakhs in China, mostly concentrated in and around the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture.

China has previously welcomed Kazakhs who wished to relocate from Kazakhstan, but many Kazakhs with Chinese nationality are now heading back in the other direction, with their numbers peaking at nearly 38,000 in 2006.

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