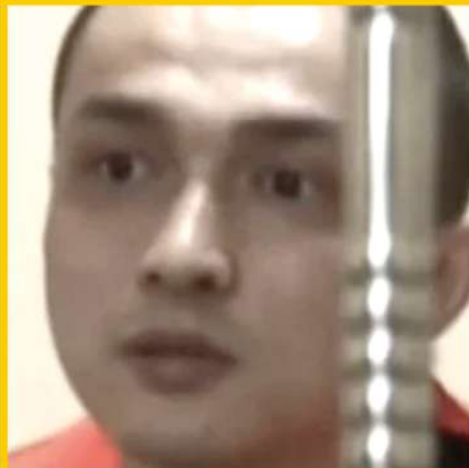


FREE UYGHUR SCHOLAR'S STUDENTS



EAST TURKISTAN PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION
شەرقىي تۈركىستان ئاخبارات ۋە مەدەنىيەت جەمئىيىتى



GERMANY URGES UN RIGHTS OFFICE TO PUBLISH UYGHUR REPORT

GENEVA (AP) — German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock called Thursday for the U.N. human rights office to release a report it has compiled on the situation of the Uyghur Muslim minority in China.

Baerbock said in a video speech to the 47-nation U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva that the global body needs “more transparency.”

“We encourage the High Commissioner (for Human Rights) to publish your report on the detention of members of the Muslim Uyghur community – and we call on Beijing to allow unfettered access,” she said.

Diplomats in Geneva have said the report on the situation in China’s western Xinjiang province has been ready — or very close to it — for months.

U.N. right chief Michelle Bachelet’s office has acknowledged delays in the release.





CHINA HAS AGREED TO ALLOW UN VISIT TO XINJIANG: UN RIGHTS CHIEF

Beijing has for years faced accusations of subjecting ethnic Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang to abuses

China has agreed to allow a UN visit to the Xinjiang region, the UN human rights chief said on Tuesday.

“I am pleased to announce that we have recently reached an agreement with the Government of China for a visit,” UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said at the 48th session of the UN Human Rights Council.

China has for years faced accusations of subjecting ethnic Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang to abuses.

Bachelet said her office and the Chinese government had “initiated concrete preparations for a visit that is foreseen to take place in May of this year” to the landlocked region in northwest China.

She said preparations would have to take into account COVID-19 regulations.

The government in Beijing has accepted the visit of an advanced team from the Human Rights office to prepare her visit

to China and that it will depart in April.

“There was an agreement on the parameters that respect our methodology. And that includes unfettered access to a broad range of actors, including civil society,” UN rights office spokesperson Liz Throssell said at a UN press conference.

According to the UN data, at least 1 million Uyghurs are kept against their will in places Beijing calls “vocational training centers” and the international community defines as “re-education camps.”

While the UN and other international organizations reiterated their calls for the camps to be opened for inspection, China has allowed a few of its designated centers to be partially viewed by a small number of foreign diplomats and journalists.

Several countries have accused China of ethnic cleansing of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Beijing has denied any wrongdoing, dismissing the allegations as “lies and (a) political virus.”

By Peter Kenny



U.S. TELLS CHINA TO GIVE UN ACCESS TO XINJIANG TO PROBE UYGHUR TREATMENT

“GENEVA, March 9 (Reuters) - The United States called on China on Wednesday to ensure that a planned visit by U.N. human rights chief Michele Bachelet includes “unhindered and unsupervised

access” to all areas of the Xinjiang region to investigate treatment of Muslim Uyghurs.

Bachelet announced on Tuesday that she had reached an agreement with China for a long-sought visit, foreseen in May, including a stop in Xinjiang.

Sheba Crocker, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, said in a statement that for a credible visit, Bachelet must be able to hold private meetings with a range of Uyghurs and groups in Xinjiang, and have access to places where forced labour has been reported.

By Reuters





TURKIYE CALLS FOR JOINT STANCE TO EASE SUFFERINGS OF MUSLIMS

Muslim bloc OIC should act as single identity to help protect rights of Muslim communities across world, Foreign Minister Cavusoglu says

The Turkish foreign minister on Tuesday called for collective efforts to protect the rights of Muslims and ease the sufferings they face across the globe, including in Palestine, Kashmir, and Cyprus.

Addressing the Islamabad meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mevlut Cavusoglu touched upon a string of simmering issues ranging from Islamophobia to the plight of Uyghur Muslims and from the war in Ukraine to the Palestine conflict.

The OIC, he said, exists for a common cause, and, it is only when the Muslim bloc acts as a single identity that it helps pro-

tect the rights of subjugated Muslim communities in different parts of the world.

It is “war, terror, pain, and suffering” that come out of the seven-decade occupation of Jerusalem, Cavusoglu stated.

He also said Muslim Turks in Cyprus have been denied their fundamental rights for five decades, as well as “Muslim brothers and sisters” in Indian-administered Kashmir.

Drawing to the plight of Uyghur Muslims in China’s Xinjiang province, Cavusoglu said the persecuted Muslim community should not be left alone just because “you have differences with Turkiye.”

“In China, Uyghur Turks and other Muslims are having difficulties in protecting their cultural identity and rights,” he said.



Citing a saying of Prophet Muhammad that calls for unity among Muslims, he said the miseries of Uyghur Muslims and Turkish Muslims in Cyprus must not be ignored just because “you have good relations with that country,” a thinly veiled reference to good relations between China and some Muslim countries, including Pakistan.

“We don’t want you to spoil your relations with that country. But you should use these good relations to improve the situation in which the Uyghur community is living,” he maintained.

Also mentioning the recent hijab ban in some Indian states, Cavusoglu regretted that Muslim women are denied the right to cover their heads.

Islamophobia, war in Ukraine

The top Turkish diplomat said Islamophobia is on the rise in Europe.

Referring to the racist reporting about the refugees from the Middle East and Afghanistan during the ongoing war in Ukraine, Cavusoglu said Russia’s war in its neighbor has revealed the double standards across the world while conflicts in Libya, Syria, and Yemen have continued for years.

“For us, blood in Kharkiv (Ukraine) and blood in Aleppo (Syria) is the same because this is what our civilization requires,” he said.

The ongoing war in Europe, he went on to say, is affecting everyone. “It’s a period where ethical values are under attack.”

Cavusoglu urged self-criticism to solve the problems of the Muslim worldwide.

“Who is responsible for the current conditions of Muslim Ummah? Blaming others for that is very easy but it will not help. Today, we should be self-critics, and try to see how can we fix ourselves,” he said.

Humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan

Speaking to Anadolu Agency after the meeting, Cavusoglu said he met several counterparts on the sidelines, including Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud.

“We had a very constructive and fruitful meeting to normalize our relations and even make our reviews better than before. We are in terms to cooperate to work together,” he said.

On the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Cavusoglu said Turkish humanitarian organizations are already working there and Ankara has sent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and provided financial assistance through the UN and non-governmental organizations.

“We have not recognized the Taliban administration but we advise everyone to be

engaged with it,” he said.

He also said the Turkish Maarif Foundation has opened its schools and two more schools for girls are opening in Kabul soon.

“If the country (Afghanistan) collapses (again), the cost will be much more,” Cavusoglu warned.

Regarding the war in Ukraine, he said they are working to achieve a cease-fire, and Türkiye is in contact with both sides as the civilians are paying the price in war.

“Yesterday, I also had some calls with my colleagues who are participating in negotiations in Belarus,” he said, adding Türkiye will continue to work to end the ongoing war.

By Aamir Latif





HISTORY WILL JUDGE IOC AND FIFA AS OPPORTUNISTIC HYPOCRITES OVER RUSSIA

By allowing their crown jewels to be used to burnish Russia's image, the sports bodies have been complicit in Putin's acts

It took just eight days, and a war, for the International Olympic Committee to pull off an audacious mid-air manoeuvre that would not have been out of place on the slopes of the Winter Olympics. For much of February, as Beijing hosted the 2022 Games, the IOC was insistent: there is no place for politics in sport. "With regards to the Uyghur population, the position of the IOC must be to give political neutrality," said the president, Thomas Bach, in early February.

Yet just a week after the curtain fell on the Winter Olympics, the IOC radically backflipped. "In order to protect the integrity of global sports competitions and for the safety of all the participants," the IOC executive board resolved on Monday,

Russian and Belarusian athletes should be excluded from international competition. "The IOC reaffirms the call of the IOC president," the statement continued. "Give peace a chance."



All of which begs the question: why are crimes against the Uyghur people and human rights violations in China just fine, but invading Ukraine beyond the pale? After a Winter Olympics replete with resort to neutrality, this blatant hypocrisy provokes a certain feeling of whiplash. Through this inexplicable sporting lens, it seems as if some atrocities are OK, but Russia crossed the line by marching on Kyiv.

The IOC has at last done the right thing. Given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Russian participation in international sporting competitions would be unthinkable right now. Fifa, too, deserves some credit for excluding Russian teams from international competitions. The human cost is regrettable – ordinary Russian athletes, many of whom have no links to President Vladimir Putin’s regime and play no part in this current insanity. Yet a sporting ban on Russia is the only rea-

sonable course of action as missiles rain down on Ukrainian civilians.

But what took these sporting bodies so long? Russia invaded Georgia in 2008, a year after the IOC had awarded the 2014 Games to Sochi. Curiously, given recent events, the IOC was mute at the time. Six years later, on the day of the Winter Olympics closing ceremony, Russia’s annexation of Crimea began. In the following months, Russia invaded eastern Ukraine.

Rather than condemning the violence, the Olympic governing body dished out honours to Putin loyalists (which, on Monday, they laughably clawed back). Fifa followed with the men’s World Cup, in 2018, notwithstanding Russia’s continuing occupation of Crimea, its proxy separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk and, just months before the tournament, a botched assassination attempt on English soil.



Sportswashing has consequences – events in Ukraine over the past week have made that abundantly clear. By allowing their crown jewels to be used to burnish Russia’s image, the IOC and Fifa have been complicit in Putin’s wanton acts over the past decade. No doubt it is possible that, even if the 2014 Olympics or 2018 World Cup had been scrapped, we may still

be where we are today. But the IOC and Fifa's inaction hardly helped.

When they should have acted, the governing bodies lacked the conviction to make hard choices. It is easy now for both to speak out; they have had their sporting jamborees – funded by the Russian taxpayer, enriching Russian oligarchs – and gone home. It is safe to condemn Putin to-day, from their Swiss palaces, with nothing on the line. By their latest actions, the IOC and Fifa have shown themselves to be nothing but opportunistic: neutral when it suits their commercial ambitions and political when they feel the need to swing in line with global opinion.

With the Qatar 2022 World Cup later this year, the change of heart is unlikely to last. The tournament will go ahead using infrastructure quite likely built on the back of forced labour, in a nation ranked as “not free” by rights watchdog Freedom House, where the rights of women and LGBTQI+ Qataris are limited. Russia might not be there, but nor will the 6,500 migrant workers who have died in Qatar since the World Cup was awarded. Fifa's culpability runs deep.



Sport has always been political, dating right back to the first Olympiads of ancient Greece, when city states jostled, occasionally even resorting to violence, for the influence that came with hosting the Games. Insisting otherwise, as the IOC, Fifa and other global sporting bodies have long done, shows wilful disregard for reality.

Yet they persisted with the myth, including just a week ago, when the latest Olympic circus ended in Beijing with barely a squeak about human rights. Their Russia ban is welcome, if cynical. But it only underscores their tremendous duplicity, their failure of leadership and the moral vacuum that sees the brutal repression of the Uyghur people, the Tibetans, the Hongkongers as warranting no more than “political neutrality”. History will judge the IOC and Fifa as complicit hypocrites – no backflip on Russia will stop that.

By Kieran Pender



‘WE’LL KILL YOU’: UYGHUR EXILE WHO FLED TO ARCTIC CIRCLE STILL FEARS REACH OF CHINESE STATE

For asylum seekers, Norway is a sanctuary but even in remote towns, Muslim refugees say they face surveillance and threats

In a remote corner north of the Arctic Circle, Memettursun Omer gazes out the window at the swirling snowstorm outside as the tinny voice of a Chinese official blares from the mobile phone in his hand.

An Uyghur Muslim from China’s remote north-west Xinjiang region, Omer has travelled about as far as he can go to escape the Chinese authorities – to the small Norwegian town of Kirkenes.

So far, he says, they have always managed to find him. On dozens of messages left on his phone since he left China, voices he says are those of Chinese agents wheedle, cajole and threaten. “We didn’t send you out there so you could behave like this,” drawls an official in one record-

ing. “You’re forgetting who you are.”

Four years before, Omer says he was sent by the same handlers to Europe on a secret mission: to infiltrate and spy on Uyghur groups who were drawing attention to the human rights abuses being perpetrated against millions of their community and other ethnic minorities.

Months before he left, Omer had been detained by the Chinese state after returning from working abroad. He says he was tortured, beaten and interrogated about his connections in Europe before being put through months of grooming, brainwashing and threats. Eventually, his handlers decided he had become a loyal Chinese citizen, willing to do the state’s bidding.

Before he left the region, Omer says he was forced to sign a statement admitting he was a terrorist. “Wherever you go, we

can use this to show you're a criminal and bring you back to China," he says his handlers told him at the airport.

"If you ever start to forget what we told you, just look at the moon. Wherever you can see the moon, we can find you."

Yet Omer had no intention of becoming a Chinese spy. He went to Istanbul, where he attempted to start a new life, getting married and reuniting with his father. All the while he says he was continually threatened and harassed by his former Chinese handlers.



"We'll kill you," he says one agent told his family over a WhatsApp call, shortly after he arrived in Turkey. "You don't need us to tell you how we do things. We'll deal with this problem according to our own rules."

Last year, Omer felt it was too dangerous to stay in Istanbul and left Turkey. He ended up in an asylum camp in this small Norwegian town within the Arctic Circle, near the Russian border.

When Omer arrived in early January, he spent days walking around the icy border town in the blue twilight of the polar winter, gazing out at the desolate wilderness.

"I've lived my whole life surrounded by people. But here, there's hardly anyone around. It's all so different," he says. "I

never dreamed I would end up this far north."

But Kirkenes' isolation was part of its appeal. The allegations of human rights abuses facing China's Uyghur population have been widely documented and internationally condemned, with an estimated 1 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities thought to be locked up in a network of internment camps.

For those who manage to flee, Norway, with its egalitarian laws and exemplary democracy, seems like the safest place on earth. There are about 2,500 Uyghurs asylum seekers in Norway as asylum seekers. Yet even here, Uyghurs say they are being hunted down.

Oslo-based Uyghur activists say "close to 100%" of Uyghurs in Norway face surveillance, threats and censorship from the Chinese state. This, they say, creates a collective sense of psychological pressure; a constant feeling of being watched.

The surveillance has "a psychological way of crushing your mind", Omer says. "I felt like I was still in prison. I was scared and paranoid every day."

Merdan, a 34-year-old Uyghur refugee who says he fled Xinjiang in 2010 after being tortured in Chinese prisons, changed his name to the Norwegian-sounding "Martin Gunnar" on his arrival in the country, in an attempt to avoid detection from the Chinese state.

It did not work. Chinese officials called him while he was living in an asylum camp in southern Norway and told him that if he talked to anyone about what he had experienced in prison, it would be dangerous for his family.

Yet Merdan refused to be intimidated. He

became an activist, filming YouTube videos about the Uyghur human rights crisis from his home and driving around town in an Audi with an unmistakable customised numberplate that says “UYGHUR”.

“When I first got the plate, I drove five or six times past the Chinese embassy. Because I’m not a terrorist, I’m doing nothing wrong,” he says with a laugh.

Then, in 2018, he got a video call. His father was sobbing while filming his mother, whose knees were bandaged.

“If you don’t stop what you’re doing, maybe they will come to further harm her,” Merdan’s father said.

Merdan says he was called again in 2019 and 2020 by Chinese security officers. “They threatened me, suggesting ‘maybe I would get into a car accident’ or ‘thieves might come into my house while I was on night shift’,” he says.

Merdan claims that the officer offered him money, indicating that in return, he would spy on other Uyghurs. Merdan refused. He has now installed multiple surveillance cameras around his house. “Nobody can trust anybody,” he says.

After Muetter Iliqad began writing anonymous articles about the persecution of Uyghurs for a Norwegian website, Chinese police visited the home of her grandmother. “I have no idea how they figured it out,” Iliqad says.

Instead of being silenced, Iliqad, who arrived in Kirkenes at 13 in 2011, stopped using a pseudonym and began publishing under her own name. “I realised there was no sense in being anonymous because they can just find out anyway,” she says.

The harassment of Uyghur asylum seek-

ers in Norway follows a familiar pattern to how other authoritarian states attempt to “eliminate” perceived threats, says Martin Bernsen, an adviser to the Norwegian police security service.

“China, Iran and other authoritarian states use their intelligence services to identify and spy on dissidents and refugees in Norway, and will continue to do so in 2022,” he says.

The Chinese embassy in Oslo denied allegations of persecution by Chinese officials.

“The Chinese government and the Chinese embassy in Norway have never conducted such action,” an embassy spokesperson said in a statement, adding that it had issued several warnings about telecom fraud in the name of the Chinese embassy and had reported these to the Norwegian police.

“What you mentioned are totally groundless rumours and lies fabricated by anti-China forces. There is no evidence so far to support any of those accusations,” it said. “In front of indisputable facts, a lie repeated a thousand times will remain a lie.”

At least for Omer, his fear of the Chinese agents’ threats is starting to fade. Here in the Arctic, where the aurora borealis flickers overhead and every sound is muted by snow, he says he feels safer than he has in years.

“I sleep better here,” he says. “It almost feels like I’ve come to the edge of the world.”

By Isobel Cockerell for Coda Story in Kirkenes, Norway



CHINA AIMS TO ELIMINATE UYGHUR CULTURE, ORDERS CLOSURE OF 160 ORGANIZATIONS

Beijing [China], March 3 (ANI): Chinese government has issued orders for the closure of 160 organizations devoted to researching traditional Uyghur culture and to the teaching of foreign languages with an aim to eradicate the culture of Uyghurs.

Kasimjan Abdurehim, who founded the Atlan Vocational Training School of Uyghurs says, "This policy of elimination the Chinese government is carrying out -- or, in its own words, this 'war on terror' -- is a war against the Uyghurs," reported Radio Free Asia.

Kasimjan now lives in the United States and revealed that the campaign against Uyghurs started 4 years ago.

"This is proof," he added. "We can see the cancellation, the elimination, of these Uyghur-run schools and organizations on the list as one small piece of evidence that the policies of the Chinese government

continue to operate at ever-new highs."

The Civil Affairs Bureau of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) issues notice on February 22 that states "revocation of registration certificates and seals of the legal representatives of social organizations," according to Chinese media reports published and infor-



mation on the websites of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and the Urumqi municipal government.

“The list of 160 organizations to be shut down also includes the Uyghur Classical Literature and Muqam Research Association, Dolan Farmer Painters’ Association, Atlan Vocational Training School, Intil Language School and Miraj Vocational Training School, reported Radio Free Asia.

Kasimjan said that most of the organizations included in the list are founded by Uyghurs. He said new Xinjiang Communist Party Secretary Ma Xingrui will follow the same path as previous Chinese leaders in the region concerning the repression of the Uyghurs.

The Chinese government is also trying to eliminate the cultural relics of Uyghurs including the targeting of Uyghur muqam, a musical mode and set of melodic formulas that guide improvisation and composition in Uyghur music, and other repertoires in countries across Europe.

The European Uyghur Ensemble has performed Uyghur muqam. Ensemble members denounced the closure of the Muqam Research Society as “one piece of clear evidence of the ongoing elimination of Uyghur culture.”

“Now, I’ve heard this news that they have shut down this great research society,” Abbas said. “I’m really shocked to hear this. How can they look at something so important and just eliminate it?”

From ANI



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本机关依据国务院《社会团体登记管理条例》、《民办非企业单位登记管理暂行条例》、《基金会管理条例》等法律法规，对新疆自然生态保护基金会等160个全区性社会组织（名单附后）作出撤销登记的行政处罚。现对上述社会组织的法人登记证书和印章予以公告作废。

上述被撤销登记的社会组织应在本公告发布之日起三个月内完成清算、注销手续办理。除组织清算、办理注销手续外，其他活动均属非法活动。对不按期办理注销手续的，本机关将建议相关部门依法依规对其法定代表人进行失信惩戒，并将相关失信行为计入其个人信用记录。

特此公告。

附：已撤销登记的全区性社会组织名单

[撤销名单](#)

自治区民政厅
2022年2月22日



ANTI-CHINA PROTEST MARCH HELD IN ISTANBUL

Istanbul [Turkey], March 10 (ANI): On the occasion of International Women's Day, a theme-based protest was held in Istanbul against human rights violations in China.

The protest, titled "Blue March", was organized by Hidayetullah Oguzkhan, President of East Turkistan Union of NGOs.

Despite police restrictions, thousands of women protesters marched towards the Sanrachna park, near Beyazit Square on March 8.

Protestors holding Uyghur flags and placards raised anti-China and pro-East Turkistan slogans.

Some people were seen holding placards with slogans "shame on Imran Khan for deporting Uyghur women to China" and "Imran blind-eyed for Uyghur Muslim women".

They demanded the closure of mass in-

ternment camps and the end of the forced separation of children in China's Xinjiang.

Some protestors chanted slogans like "stop the genocide" and "close the camps".

According to the rights group, some 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities are being held in a network of detention camps in Xinjiang since 2017.

China has been rebuked globally for the crackdown on Uyghur Muslims by sending them to mass detention camps, interfering in their religious activities, and sending members of the community to undergo some form of forcible re-education or indoctrination.

However, Beijing has justified the detentions saying the camps are vocational training centres and denied allegations of torturing people in the camps or mistreating other Muslims living in Xinjiang.

From ANI



CHINA SLAMS NORWAY STATE FUND OVER XINJIANG FORCED-LABOUR FEARS

China on Wednesday blasted a decision by Norway's sovereign wealth fund to sell off its stake in a Chinese company due to rights concerns, warning the move may cause "unnecessary losses" to Oslo's interests.

“The Norwegian central bank said Monday it would divest from sports brand Li-Ning “due to unacceptable risk that the company contributes to serious human rights violations”, after its ethics council linked the company with forced labour in China’s Xinjiang region.

Beijing stands accused of having detained more than a million Uyghur and other Turkic-speaking Muslims in political re-education camps across Xinjiang and exploiting them for forced labour.

Human rights groups say they have found evidence of torture and forced sterilisation in the region, and countries including the United States, France and Canada have labelled the situation a “genocide”.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian on Wednesday called the accusations a “huge lie concocted by anti-China forces”.





He urged “relevant parties ... not to be deceived by lies, so as to avoid unnecessary losses to their own interests”.

Norway’s sovereign wealth fund -- known as the oil fund -- is the largest in the world and was worth 12,340 billion Norwegian kroner (\$1,381 billion) at the end of last year.

At the time, it held 0.59 percent of Li-Ning shares, valued at nearly 1.5 billion kroner -- but have since sold them.

The fund is governed by ethical rules that prohibit it from investing in companies involved in serious human rights violations, those that manufacture “particularly in-

humane” or nuclear weapons as well as coal and tobacco products.

It dumped Li-Ning following a recommendation from its ethics council, which in an advisory opinion pointed to reports linking the company to “a supplier said to manufacture inside an internment camp”, according to the central bank.

China and Norway clashed in 2020 when Beijing temporarily banned imports of Norwegian salmon, warning that the fish was a potential source of Covid-19.

By AFP





Kebangkitan China, Teman atau Lawan?

HOW CHINA IS USING SCHOLARSHIPS TO SHAPE INDONESIAN MUSLIM STUDENTS' VIEWS

China has expanded its soft-power clout in Indonesia in recent years to accompany its growing economic and political foothold in Indonesia. One of these endeavours is courting Muslim students, known as “Santri”, with scholarships.

This is part of China’s ongoing efforts to maintain its positive image, while ensuring its policies on religion, including its mistreatment of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, is seen from the perspective of China alone.

China has been offering scholarships to Indonesians for years. However, the more active targeting of the Santri community is very recent. It follows the implementation of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and news about China’s discrimination against the Uyghurs, which has drawn criticism from many Indonesians.

Many of these students are now writing in

local media to promote the idea that “religious freedom” is ensured in China. They are associating the Xinjiang region, home to the Uyghurs, with insurgency as China does.

They now also speak about China in a positive way in the country’s mainstream media. Some have even condemned Muslim students who called for a boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics or who protest against China’s policy towards Xinjiang.

A recent peer-reviewed study reveals a shifting of views among members of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia’s second-largest

Muslim organisation, who reside in China, the majority of them students. Their social media activities have begun to present a more positive image of China.

China is targeting Indonesia's Muslim students

Although precise data are difficult to find, it is reported that China is the second top destination for Indonesian students. The latest data in 2019 from the Indonesian embassy in Beijing recorded 15,780 Indonesians studying in China.

These scholarships have taken many forms, although most students receive the Chinese Government Scholarship (CGS).

The most important is the one provided to the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), to allow NU-affiliated students to pursue education in China.

These students are spread across several Chinese universities. As their number increased, they even founded the NU China chapter (PCINU Tiongkok).

The scholarship holders also organise various events in China such as webinars and book launches.

One example was on Santri Day in 2020, when NU China held a webinar on the roles of Santri in strengthening China-Indonesia relations.

Students also frequently attend Beijing-orchestrated events such as the Xinjiang Brief Forum. The forum was specifically designed to invite Muslims outside China and advise them on how to communicate the Xinjiang issue to their respective communities.

During the events, students agreed that the Xinjiang issue needs to be seen “comprehensively”, choosing not to believe Western media reports.

NU China was also invited to the China-Indonesia Symposium on Islamic Culture in Quanzhou in Wuhan in 2019 and 2020. The event is hosted by the Fujian government together with Huaqiao University and the China-Indonesia People-to-People Exchange Development Forum. It has become a forum for sharing the views of academics, practitioners and officials on Indonesia-China relations.

The NU-led news website, NU Online, publishes articles that seem to paint a



picture of a peaceful and comfortable life for Muslims living in China.

As well as NU, China has also offered scholarships to Muhammadiyah. Even though the precise number is not reported, this effort appears to have borne fruit. These scholarship holders are starting to sing the praises of Beijing.

There are even short-term scholarships. In 2019, for instance, Beijing offered scholarships to Santris to visit the Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region to see the lives of Muslims in the area.

China has also collaborated with Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send several Indonesian students to visit China in the "Santri For World Peace, Goes to China" program.

These students met representatives of various state-led institutions, including the China Islamic Association (CIA), to hear the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) version of the "Islam in China" story.

On a visit in 2019, for example, CIA's leading figure claimed the relationship between Chinese Muslims and the Chinese government was very good.

Earlier in 2013, around 60 Santris from Ar-Risalah Islamic boarding school in East Java were invited to attend a summer school in Hangzhou. Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school in Central Java also reported that a number of its students had received scholarships to study in China.

Over the years, China has said it will continue to provide scholarships to Indonesian Muslim students.

Last year, for instance, the Ningxia Autonomous Region promoted its scholar-

ship program to the Indonesian Santri community under the banner "Graduates from Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia can study technology and business at Ningxia University".

These scholarships are not only being promoted by Chinese representatives, but also by alumni through seminars and conferences. Many of these are held in mosques and Islamic universities.

Countering Beijing's narrative

These Santri, who are well-versed in Islam's concept of brotherhood, should speak out more about the plight of Xinjiang Uyghurs. They should not believe Beijing's narrative, given that many human rights organisations, independent panels and even survivors from Xinjiang have confirmed China's discrimination against the Uyghurs.

To date, it is difficult to find reports of these Santri ever confronting Beijing about the Uyghur issue.

The Santri community should use their time in China to learn more about the Uyghur struggle and the community's actual living conditions, as well as lobbying the Indonesian government and leading figures to issue a strong statement on China's Xinjiang policy.

One alternative is to write an open letter to China, urging it to halt its Xinjiang policies, as well as to Jakarta, to put pressure on China. This message can also be sent to other Santris around the world as well as relevant non-governmental organisations.

By Muhammad Zulfikar Rakhmat



US CHARGES 5 CHINESE NATIONALS WITH HARASSING CHINESE IN US CRITICAL OF BEIJING

U.S. authorities announced charges Wednesday against five people who were allegedly working for the Chinese secret police to spy on and harass Chinese nationals living in the U.S. who had been critical of Beijing.

Breon Peace, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York, announced the charges.

The five allegedly harassed, stalked and spied on their targets.

One person, Qiming Lin — named in the court filings as a member of China's Ministry of State Security and currently based in China — allegedly tried to interfere with the candidacy of one target, a U.S. military veteran who was running for Congress. The candidate had been involved

in the 1989 pro-democracy protests at Tiananmen Square, which the Chinese government violently suppressed.

Another allegedly tried to destroy the artwork of one target who was living in the Los Angeles area.

Another, who started a pro-democracy group in the Queens borough of New York City, was charged with collecting information about prominent activists and passing the information to the Chinese government.



“Transnational repression harms people in the United States and around the world and threatens the rule of law itself,” said Matthew G. Olsen, assistant attorney general for national security, who added that the U.S. “will not allow any foreign government” to engage in such activities.

Peace said the charges “reveal the outrageous and dangerous lengths” China will go to to “silence, harass, discredit and spy

on U.S. residents for simply exercising their freedom of speech.”

Three of the five defendants have been arrested and were set to appear in court on Wednesday. Two remain at large.

The charges are the latest in an attempt by the Justice Department to expose Chinese efforts to harass dissidents in the U.S.

In 2015, the Obama administration reportedly warned Beijing against Chinese agents involved in such activities.

Some information in this report came from Reuters.

From VOA



CHINA: FREE UYGHUR SCHOLAR'S STUDENTS

Newly Leaked List Includes 7 Prisoners Who Studied Under Ilham Tohti

(New York) — The Chinese government should immediately release all remaining imprisoned students of the Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti, Human Rights Watch said today. A government list of prisoners leaked in December 2021 indicates that six of the seven students on the list were sentenced in December 2014 to between three-and-a-half and eight years in prison. Although they would have completed their sentences, it is unclear whether they have been released.

Ilham Tohti, 52, who began writing about social problems facing Uyghurs in China's Xinjiang region in 1994, was arrested in January 2014 on charges of "separatism" and sentenced to life in prison after a trial

that was riddled with due process violations.

"China's severe repression in Xinjiang raises serious concerns that the seven students are still under some form of detention or movement restrictions," said Maya Wang, senior China researcher at Human Rights Watch. "The Chinese government should immediately free them and restore their rights."

The trials of Ilham Tohti and the students were the same year that the Chinese government opened its abusive "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" against the 11 million Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. The authorities ramped up the

campaign in late 2016 and arbitrarily detained over a million Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in “political education” camps, formal detention centers, and prisons.

Human Rights Watch, Xinjiang Victims Database, and other organizations have previously documented cases in which individuals who were supposed to be released from prison during the Strike Hard Campaign were sent soon after release or immediately to political education camps or prisons instead.

The seven prisoners, who were Ilham Tohti’s students at the Central Nationalities University of China or volunteers for his website Uyghurbiz.net, are Abduqeyum Ablimit, Perhat Halmurat, Akbar (or Ekbar) Imin, Mutellip Imin, Shohret Nijat, Atikem Rozi, and Luo Yuwei. According to the leaked list, five of the seven were convicted of “separatism” on December 7, 2014:

Abduqeyum Ablimit (阿卜杜凯尤木·阿卜力米提), born in 1990, was sentenced to three years and six months. He was held in Xinjiang No. 6 Prison (also known as Xinshoufan Prison) in Urumqi, Xinjiang’s regional capital, and his sentence should have ended on July 17, 2017.

Perhat Halmurat (帕哈提·哈力木拉提), born in 1988, was sentenced to eight years and held in Turpan Prison. His sentence should have ended on January 14, 2022.

Akbar (or Ekber) Imin (阿可拜尔·依明), born in 1981, was sentenced to five years and held in Xinjiang No. 3 Prison in Urumqi. His sentence should have ended on January 14, 2019.

Mutellip Imin (穆塔力浦·伊明), born in

1988, was sentenced to seven years in prison. He was held in Xinjiang No. 1 Prison. His sentence should have ended on January 14, 2021.

Shohret Nijat (肖克来提·尼加提), born in 1987, was sentenced to seven years in prison. He was held in Turpan Prison. His sentence should have ended on January 14, 2021.

The only woman of the group, Atikem Rozi (阿提克木·如孜), born in 1991, was sentenced to four years in prison in a separate hearing on December 22, 2014, also for “separatism.” She was held in Xinjiang Women’s Prison, and her sentence should have ended on January 16, 2018. A short clip of her – speaking in Uyghur and dressed in prison uniform – appeared briefly in an April 2021 Chinese government propaganda film, allegedly showing that Uyghurs are susceptible to “radical separatist thoughts.” That clip was the only recent information the authorities had released on the students since 2014.

The leaked list has no information on Luo Yuwei (罗玉伟), the only non-Uyghur member of the group, who was also tried in December 2014.

The list provides the most detailed information on the students since late 2014, when they were tried and sentenced in secret. At the time, Ilham Tohti’s lawyers, Liu Xiaoyuan and Li Fangping, told the media that the students were convicted on a charge of separatism and were given between three and eight years in prison. But they had no details on the individual sentencing of each student. Liu and Li had obtained this information from the students’ legal counsel.

The Chinese government has never released the students’ sentencing informa-

tion. A search for the students' names on the Supreme People's Court verdict database returned no results.

The leaked list – created in August 2015 – contains the names, genders, ethnicities, dates of birth, ID numbers, addresses, crimes, sentencing dates, and other details of over 18,000 Uyghurs in Xinjiang convicted of political and religious crimes. The anonymous source, who said they are a “Han Chinese who is opposed to the Chinese government's policies in Xinjiang,” emailed this list of 18,000 prisoners and another of 10,000 Uyghur prisoners to the Xinjiang Victims Database in December 2021.

Xinjiang Victims Database, a website documenting cases of people in Xinjiang who were detained, forcibly disappeared, or whose rights were otherwise violated since September 2018, has verified the leaked lists. The Database said details contained in the leaked list are consistent with other information it had collected. The situations of about 1,500 people on the list were already documented in the Database. Some of the personal and detention details of about 20 people matched information that had not been publicly disclosed previously.

Ilham Tohti's daughter, Jewher Ilham, said that his family has not been given access to visit him since early 2017. The prominent scholar established Uyghurbiz.net, a Chinese-language forum, in 2006 to raise awareness about problems facing Uyghurs, and to foster dialogue between Uyghurs and the majority Han Chinese. The Chinese authorities harassed him and had him under surveillance for years, barred him from teaching, and periodically placed him under house arrest. Officials detained him at Beijing Capital

International Airport in 2013 as he was travelling to take up a post as a visiting scholar at Indiana University in the United States. He was put on trial the following year.

The Chinese government has long carried out repressive policies against Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Since the 1990s, it has accelerated Xinjiang's integration into China by encouraging Han migration, developing the region's economy, and exploiting its natural resources. These policies, imposed on Uyghurs with no consultation, marginalized them and fueled their grievances against the Chinese government. Uyghurs also face official discrimination throughout China. Rozi, one of the imprisoned students, wrote an essay saying she had been denied a Chinese passport because of her ethnicity, the Chinese state tabloid, the Global Times, reported in 2012.

The Chinese government's mass violations against Uyghurs have escalated since the Strike Hard Campaign and amount to crimes against humanity, Human Rights Watch said. The authorities persecute through punishment in political education camps and lengthy imprisonment any Uyghur who is deemed a threat to state security, or whose thoughts contain what the authorities refer to as “ideological viruses.”

“Dozens of governments and United Nations human rights experts have challenged Beijing over its atrocity crimes targeting Uyghurs,” Wang said. “They should now press for information that these students have been released from prison, and if not, call for their and Ilham Tohti's immediate release.”

From Human Rights Watch



China, which has been committing genocide in East Turkistan, and Russia, which has invaded Ukraine, are standing together.

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