



FAMILIES DEMAND ANSWERS OVER FIRE THAT TRIGGERED PROTESTS 'I HOLD CHINA ACCOUNTABLE'



EAST TURKISTAN PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION
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AT LEAST 35 PEOPLE DIED IN THE URUMQI FIRE

By Istiqlal English, 2022.11.25

According to video recordings obtained from open sources, a fire broke out in the home of Uyghurs living on the 16th floor of a complex near the Big International Market in Tanridag District of Urumqi at around 18:00 pm on November 24.

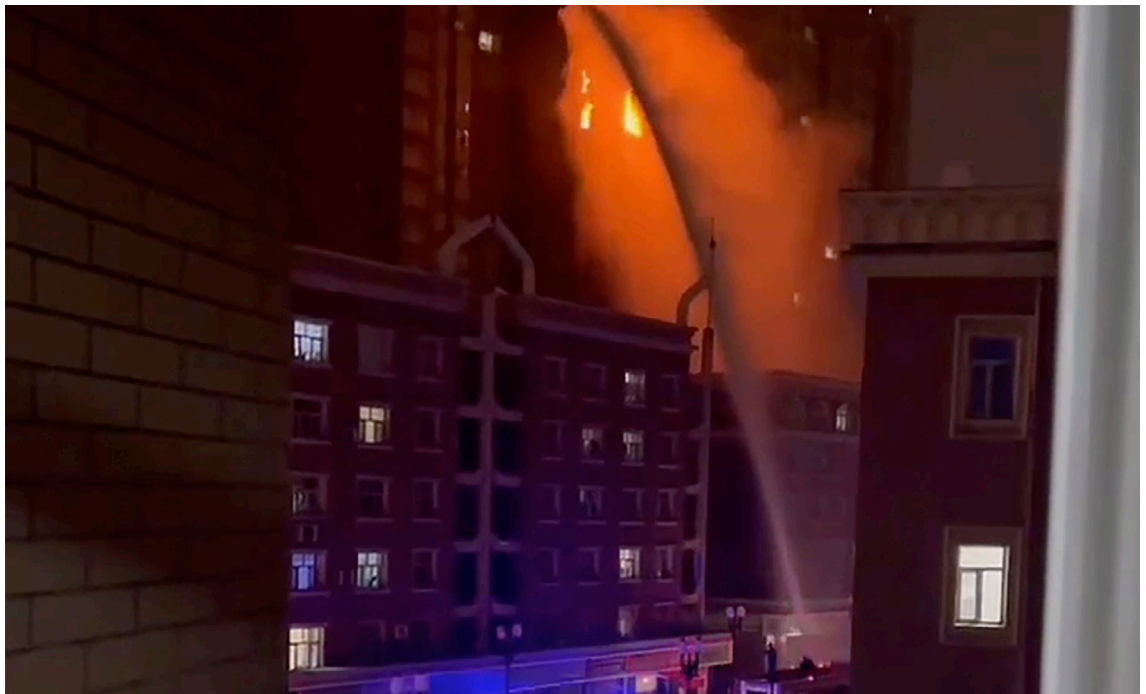
The fire engines had difficulty entering the site for 3 hours because the road was narrow and they could not overcome the barriers set up under the pretext of the so-called quarantine. The fire increased because the teams that came to extinguish it intervened remotely.

It is alleged that at least 35 people, including a 5-year-old child, died in the fire that broke out while the Chinese

authorities had confined the Uyghurs in their homes for nearly 115 days, under the pretext of the so-called Chinese epidemic. He also mentioned that only five people from one family died in the fire, and five other houses were exposed to fire due to not extinguishing the fire promptly.

According to the information, it was mentioned that all the doors of the houses in the compound are locked with iron wires from the outside, and the doors of the emergency exits are also closed by the Chinese authorities.

After the incident, the barriers began to be removed. In addition, while the Chinese authorities did not make any statement about the incident, it was reflected on the cameras that, as of humanity”.



the morning hours, the so-called fedayeen in white clothes began removing sandbags and iron barriers that were placed in front of the entrances to the building in some areas of Urumqi. Enforced isolation has been forced across East Turkistan for 115 days. In previously leaked footage, a person expressed concern that it would be impossible for them to reach a safe place in the event of a fire or earthquake, as the doors of Uyghur homes were still closed from the outside.

As a matter of fact, the people's cries of "Open the doors!", "Help me", and "Save us" in Urumqi are heartbreaking.

The Chinese propaganda media, as usual, circulated false news about the number of dead and wounded. However, eyewitnesses and many social media users confirmed

that the number of dead and wounded is not 10 dead and 9 wounded, as claimed by Chinese government channels, but rather that at least 38 people died in at least 5 houses without being able to get out of the houses.

As is known, the nearest fire brigade is only 810 meters away from the large international market where the fire broke out. A women's and children's hospital is 865 meters away, and Urumqi General Hospital is 1.3 km away.

If people had the opportunity to get out, they would certainly have survived, but their doors are closed from the outside.

In this clip, the little boy yells, "You're bad, why don't you save me... Save me", Minutes before his death.

ANKARA ASKS BEIJING TO EXPLAIN DEADLY FIRE IN EAST TURKISTAN

TO RELEASE DETAINED UYGHUR

The Turkish Foreign Ministry has asked China to inform the public about the reasons behind the fire that killed at least 10 people and injured nine others in East Turkistan.

"We expect the reasons behind the fire to be made public," a written statement by the Foreign Ministry on Nov. 26 read, following the news that fire killed civilians in Uyghur.

"We are deeply saddened to learn that a fire, which broke out in Urumqi, capital of East Turkistan, caused loss of lives and injuries. We extend our condolences and

wish a speedy recovery to the injured," the ministry noted.

The fire broke out on the 15th floor of an apartment in Uyghur, which is under strict coronavirus lockdown. The fire and loss of lives have triggered protests in the region with criticism against the government for imposing harsh quarantine without delivering proper services.

China has long been accused of imposing assimilatory policies in East Turkistan whose population is overwhelmingly

Muslim.

Türkiye, Human rights groups have



No: 357, 26 Kasım 2022, Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin Sincan Uygur Özerk Bölgesi'ndeki Yangın Hk.

Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin Sincan Uygur Özerk Bölgesi'nin başkenti Urumçi'de çıkan yangın sonucunda hayatlarını kaybedenler ve yaralananlar olduğu derin üzüntüyle öğrenilmiştir. Bu elim hadise nedeniyle taziyelerimizi iletiyor, yaralılara acil şifalar diliyoruz.

Yangının çıkış nedenine ilişkin kamuoyunun aydınlatılmasını bekliyoruz.

'I HOLD CHINA ACCOUNTABLE': UYGHUR FAMILIES DEMAND ANSWERS OVER FIRE THAT TRIGGERED PROTESTS

For more than five years, Sharapat Mohamad Ali and her brother Mohamad had been unable to contact their family in far western China, where the government has been accused of incarcerating up to 2 million Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities in internment camps.

They believe their father and brother are among those detained in East Turkistan, so have long been primed for bad news. But when they finally received word about their family on Friday, it was even worse than they might have imagined. Friends alerted them to social media images that showed the bodies of their mother,

Kamarnisahan Abdulrahman, and their 13-year-old sister Shehide, who had died along with three of their other siblings when a fire ripped through an apartment block in Urumqi, East Turkistan's capital, on November 24.

"I learned the awful news about my family

from social media,” Sharapat, 25, told CNN through tears on a video call from Turkey, where she and her brother moved to study in early 2017.

“My mom was such a wonderful woman, she loved to help people,” her brother added.

The tragedy has been blamed on a Covid-19 lockdown that appears to have hampered both the efforts of rescue services to enter the building and those of residents trying to flee – and was the catalyst for protests that swept multiple Chinese cities at the weekend as people vented their anger at the government’s uncompromising zero-Covid policy.

The strategy, which relies on mass testing, lockdowns and digital tracking to stamp out outbreaks, has failed to contain more contagious variants as China clings to its draconian approach long after the rest of the world has largely moved on.

In Urumqi, which has a population of nearly 4 million, a strict Covid lockdown has been imposed since August, with most residents banned from leaving their homes for more than 100 days.

China’s state-run news agency Xinhua claimed the fire killed 10 people and injured nine, but reports from local residents suggest the real toll is far higher.

A day after the blaze, Urumqi local government officials denied that the city’s Covid policies were to blame for the deaths, adding that an investigation was underway.

Meanwhile, the local and central governments have largely avoided acknowledging the protests directly.

On Saturday, the Urumqi government said it would ease the lockdown “in stages,” suggesting this was because it had “basically eliminated Covid cases” – despite the city continuing to log around



100 cases per day.

On Monday, Beijing's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said China "has been making adjustments" to its Covid policy "based on realities on the ground."

A day later, he responded to a question about the arrest and beating of a BBC journalist at a protest in Shanghai by saying the police had "asked people who had gathered at a crossroads to leave." The ruling Communist Party's committee on domestic security also made an oblique reference to "hostile forces" that it suggested were responsible for destabilizing the social order.

This week, a heavy police presence has discouraged protesters from gathering, while authorities in some cities have adopted surveillance tactics used previously in East Turkistan to intimidate those who took to the streets.

As the Chinese security apparatus smothers dissent, the fire victims' families

are demanding answers.

Kamarnisahan Abdulrahman's nephew Abdul Hafiz, who lives in Switzerland, said Chinese authorities had "left people helpless in a dangerous situation."

"I want to hold China accountable for this tragedy," he said. "We all are suffering very much."

Piecing together a tragedy

From nearly 3,000 miles away in Istanbul, where there is a large Uyghur diaspora, relatives are still trying to piece together exactly what happened in the Tengritagh district of Urumqi – known as Tianshan in Chinese.

Ali Abbas, a Uyghur who left East Turkistan in 2017, owns the apartment on the 15th floor where the fire began.

He told CNN on the phone from Turkey that the fire was sparked by an electrical fault when his granddaughter's tablet device was charging. The fire spread



swiftly through the home, which was filled with wooden furniture, despite attempts by his daughter and their neighbor to douse the flames.

Abbas, 54, said the building's community staff then arrived and ordered them to evacuate, accompanying them out of the building via the elevator.

But soon after that, the building's power went down and the elevator stopped working.

Abbas said that under the lockdown rules, households where someone had tested positive within the past month were locked inside their homes. People in other households were able to leave their apartments, but could not leave the building itself without the help of the community workers.

Chinese state-run tabloid the Global Times reported that a local official in Urumqi denied that the doors of the building

were locked, saying "residents have been allowed to walk out on a staggered basis since November 20." Instead, he blamed residents for being "unable to protect themselves as they were not familiar with the safety exits."

As the fire spread upward, residents trapped on higher floors posted desperate pleas for help on the Chinese messaging app WeChat, with one woman leaving voice messages saying her family was running out of oxygen. Community workers replied, telling people to cover their mouths with wet towels until the emergency services arrived.

But that help came too late for some.

A video of the aftermath of the blaze shared on Douyin – the Chinese version of TikTok – shows workers in hazmat suits inspecting a scene of blackened devastation.

"What happened to my neighbors is really



a big disaster,” Abbas said, breaking down. “I would like to express my sincere sorrow to all Uyghur people, to all those loved ones who lost their family members. I sincerely ask for their forgiveness.”

Killed by zero-Covid?

But for the families of those who perished, the blame for this tragedy does not lie simply with an electrical fault.

Rather, they say, it is the pandemic policy that hampered an effective evacuation of the building.

“(My family) became victims of the Chinese government’s zero-Covid policy,” said Abdul Hafiz, 27. “Even the doors of houses were locked from outside. At least if my family could go out of the door or to the roof of the building to rescue themselves, they would have survived.”

The families also say the rescue should have been quicker because the fire station and local hospital are just a few hundred

meters away from the building.

Xinhua reported that the fire broke out at around 7:49 p.m. local time on Thursday, and was extinguished almost three hours later at around 10:35 p.m.

Videos show the fire truck aiming a stream of water toward the building, but being too far back to reach the blaze – apparently due to lockdown restrictions at street level.

An Urumqi local official did acknowledge that the fire truck couldn’t get close enough to the building, but said this was because “the road leading to the building was occupied by other vehicles.”

Sharapat, whose mother and siblings were on the 19th floor, said her family succumbed to toxic smoke.

“The fire started from the 15th floor, and it poisoned my family members from the smoke,” she said. “The government did not stop the fire in time.”



Sharapat and others also believe the ethnicity of the victims played a part in their deaths. While China has used similar lockdown strategies in other parts of the country – with videos circulating on social media showing people being locked into their homes by welded bars and metal wires – they feel the lockdown in Urumqi has been unusually severe. They also believe that had the fire not been in a Uyghur neighborhood the rescue efforts would have been more swift.

The fire in East Turkistan has been covered in state media outlets and videos have also spread through social media, fueled in part by the unease over the Covid restrictions.

CNN has sent a detailed request to Chinese authorities asking whether Covid measures and policies toward the ethnic minority population were at fault for what happened. No response has been received.

‘If we went back now, we’d be in jail’

The deaths in Urumqi have not only fueled protests in mainland Chinese cities, they have also given rise to a surge of anger from Uyghur families who say they have been suffering under China’s policies for years.

The United States and other nations have described the Chinese government’s actions and camps in East Turkistan as constituting a genocide. China denies genocide, or any human rights abuses, in East Turkistan. It insists the camps are vocational and designed to fight religious

extremism.

But CNN has spoken to dozens of Uyghurs and other minorities over the past five years, along with a former Chinese police officer turned whistleblower. Their reports of the camps in East Turkistan included torture, sexual violence, and indoctrination.

Their families who were left at home have reported being subject to forced family separations, surveillance of their communications with relatives abroad, and officials acting as “relatives” being placed in their homes to monitor their behavior.

A previous CNN investigation found that people were being sent to the camps for supposed “offenses” like having too many children or showing signs of being a Muslim – such as not drinking alcohol or having a long beard.

Siblings Sharapat and Mohamad believe the reason their father and brother were not at home when the fire broke out is because they are currently in one of the camps.

CNN has asked the Chinese government for details on the whereabouts of the two men.

Neither Sharapat nor Mohamad feel safe to fly home, fearing they too would be taken away. When they left East Turkistan in early 2017, the youngest of their six siblings Nehdiye, 5, who died in the fire, had not yet been born.

“We want to attend the funeral of our

family members, but if we went back now, China will put us in jail or even torture us,” said Mohamad, 22.

Too late for solidarity?

At the same time as the crackdown on the Uyghurs, large numbers of ethnic Han – which represent the vast majority of the mainland Chinese population – have moved into East Turkistan, encouraged to move there by government policies offering them business opportunities, affordable housing and favorable tax policies.

This has fueled ethnic tensions that have been made worse by the perception of many Uyghurs that Han Chinese communities have benefited from their plight.

Beijing has claimed that the economic strategy in East Turkistan is designed to promote poverty alleviation in the poorest

part of China.

In September 2021, China’s leader Xi Jinping said policies in the region were “completely correct” and “must be adhered to in the long term,” adding that “the sense of gain, happiness, and security” among all ethnic groups had increased.

After the fire in Urumqi, Han Chinese from across the country took part in vigils held for the victims. But for many members of the Uyghur population, traumatized by years of brutality and oppression, this was a show of solidarity that came too little, too late.

“I don’t think that the Chinese people are protesting for us,” Abdul Hafiz said. “They are doing it for their own interests.”

“Since 2016, millions of people were detained in camps,” Hafiz said. “At that time, they did not stand up, they did not

Proud, Scared and Conflicted. What the China Protesters Told Me.

In more than a dozen interviews, young people explained how the events of the past few days became what one called a “tipping point.”

They went to their first demonstrations. They chanted their first protest slogans. They had their first encounters with the police.

Then they went home, shivering in disbelief at how they had challenged the most powerful authoritarian government

in the world and the most iron-fisted leader China has seen in decades.

Young Chinese are protesting the country’s harsh “zero-Covid” policy and even urging its top leader, Xi Jinping, to step down. It’s something that China hadn’t seen since 1989, when the ruling

Communist Party brutally cracked down on the pro-democracy demonstrators, mostly college students. No matter what happens in the days and weeks ahead, the young protesters presented a new threat to the rule of Mr. Xi, who has eliminated his political opponents and suppressed any voice that challenges his rule.

Such public dissent was unimaginable until a few days ago. These same young people, when they mentioned Mr. Xi online, used euphemisms like “X,” “he” or “that person,” afraid to even utter the president’s name. They put up with whatever the government put them through: harsh pandemic restrictions, high unemployment rates, fewer books available to read, movies to watch and games to play.

Then something cracked.

After nearly three long years of “zero

Covid,” which has turned into a political campaign for Mr. Xi, China’s future looks increasingly bleak. The economy is in its worst shape in decades. Mr. Xi’s foreign policy has antagonized many countries. His censorship policy, in addition to quashing challenges to his authority, has killed nearly all fun.

As a popular Weibo post put it, Chinese people are getting by with books published 20 years ago, music released a decade ago, travel photos from five years ago, income earned last year, frozen dumplings from a lockdown three months ago, Covid tests from yesterday and a freshly baked Soviet joke from today.

“I think all of these have reached a tipping point,” said Miranda, a journalist in Shanghai who participated in the protest on Saturday evening. “If you don’t do anything about it, you could really



explode.”

In the last few days, in interviews with more than a dozen young people who protested in Shanghai, Beijing, Nanjing, Chengdu, Guangzhou and Wuhan, I heard of a burst of pent-up anger and frustration with how the government carries out “zero Covid.” But their anger and despair go beyond that, all the way to questioning the rule of Mr. Xi.

Two of these people said they didn’t plan to have children, a new way to protest among young Chinese when Beijing is encouraging more births. At least four of the protesters said they were planning to emigrate. One of them refused to look for a job after being laid off by a video-game company in the aftermath of a government crackdown on the industry last year.

They went to the protests because they wanted to let the government know how they felt about being tested constantly, locked inside their apartments or kept away from family and friends in the Covid dragnet. And they wanted to show solidarity for fellow protesters.

They are members of a generation known as Mr. Xi’s children, the nationalistic “little pinks” who defend China on Weibo, Facebook and Twitter. The protesters represent a small percentage of Chinese in their 20s and early 30s. By standing up to the government, they defied the perception of their generation. Some older Chinese people said the protesters made them feel more hopeful about the country’s future.

Zhang Wenmin, a former investigative journalist known under her pen name Jiang Xue, wrote on Twitter that she had



been moved to tears by the bravery of the protesters. “It’s hard for people who haven’t lived in China in the past three to four years to imagine how much fear these people had to overcome to take to the streets, to shout, ‘Give me liberty, or give me death,’” she wrote. “Amazing. Love you all!”

As first-time marchers, most of them did not know what to expect. A Beijing protester said she had been so tense that she felt physically and emotionally exhausted the next day. More than one person told me that they needed a day to collect their thoughts before they could talk. At least three cried in our interviews.

They are proud, scared and conflicted about their experiences. They have different views about how politically explicit their slogans should be, but they

all said they found shouting the slogans cathartic.

Miranda, who has been a journalist for eight years, said she couldn’t stop crying when she shouted with the crowd, “Freedom of speech!” and “Freedom of press!” “It was the freest moment since I became a journalist,” she said, her voice cracking.

All the people I interviewed asked me to use only their first name, family name or English name to protect their safety. They had felt a relative safety when marching with others just days earlier, but none dared to put their names to comments that would be published.

The slogans that they recalled chanting were all over the place, illustrating the wide frustration with their lives. “End the lockdown!” “Freedom of speech!” “Give



back my movies!”

Quite a few of them were taken aback by how political the Saturday protest in Shanghai turned out to be.

They were equally surprised, if not more, when more people returned on Sunday to request the release of protesters who had been detained hours earlier.

All six Shanghai protesters I spoke with thought that they were going to a vigil on Saturday evening for the 10 victims who died in a fire Thursday in Urumqi, the capital of the East Turkistan in China’s west. In the beginning, the atmosphere was relaxed.

When someone first chanted, “No more Communist Party,” the crowd laughed, according to Serena, a college student who is spending her gap year in Shanghai. “Everyone knew it was the red line,” she

said.

Then it became increasingly charged. When someone yelled, “Xi Jinping, step down!” and “C.C.P., step down!” the shouts were the loudest, according to Serena and other protesters who were also there.

In Beijing, a marketing professional in her mid-20s with the surname Wu told her fellow protesters not to shout those politically explicit slogans because that would guarantee a crackdown. Instead, she shouted slogans that urged the government to follow the rule of law and release detained Shanghai protesters.

A protester in Chengdu and one in Guangzhou, separated by 1,000 miles, both said they had been stopped from shouting slogans that other demonstrators deemed too political and had been told to stick to the Covid-related demands.



For many of them, this weekend was their first brush with the police. A protester named Xiaoli in Chengdu said she had never seen so many police in her life. After being chased by them, she said she could hear her heart beating fast when she passed by officers on her way home.

It was clear that many protesters blame Mr. Xi for the extremely unpopular “zero-Covid” policy. A young Shanghai professional with the surname Zhang said Mr. Xi’s norm-breaking third term, secured at last month’s party congress, spelled the end of China’s progress. “We all gave up our illusions,” he said.

He cried when he mentioned an old man’s question during this year’s Shanghai lockdown, “Why has our country come to this?” Mr. Zhang, who said he had grown up poor in a village, was grateful for the government’s assistance in his education. “I thought we would only move upward,” he added.

The young protesters are most conflicted about the impact of their actions. They felt powerless about changing the system as long as Mr. Xi and the Communist Party are in power. They believe that many people in the public supported them because the unyielding Covid rules have violated what they see as baseline norms of Chinese society. Once the government relaxes the policy, they worry, the public’s support for protests would evaporate.

At the same time, some of them argued that their protests would make the public aware of their rights.

No one knows what the protests will become — a moment in history, or a footnote. The official state media has kept quiet, though some pro-government social media bloggers have pointed fingers at “foreign forces.” The police have enhanced their presence on the streets and called or visited protesters in an attempt to intimidate them.

Istanbul’s Uyghur community protest outside the Chinese Consulate despite the cost of reprisals

On November 30, Uyghurs living in Turkey staged a protest outside the Chinese Consulate in Istanbul against China’s stringent zero-COVID policies and in support of recent country-wide protests.

Local police at the scene threatened the protesters with deportations and told them to leave the premises. According to daily local news platform Evrensel, the group showed up outside the consulate at 5 a.m. local time.

An Uyghur activist living in Turkey shared the following video from the scene:

We have been in front of the Chinese Consulate since 05:00 this morning. Why this early? Because otherwise we are prevented from approaching the consulate, so we yell at the sea. But despite us coming this early, look at what we were confronted with! They said they will deport us!

“We are going to sweep you down the street,” a man in a hat tells one Uyghur woman who asks him not to yell. He then proceeds to tell the group to move down. “We are going to first arrest, then deport you,” the man is heard yelling minutes later.

In response, the Minister of Interior Suleyman Soylu said it was upsetting to witness earlier treatment of “our Uyghur siblings.” Addressing the matter via his Twitter account the minister wrote, “we hereby express our regret and apology

and inform that an investigation has been launched.

“Respect the Republic of Turkey,” the same man was heard yelling in the video after an Uyghur woman said their interlocutor was China.

In another video, a young man breaks into tears, as he shares pictures of his family whom he has not seen in seven years but who died in a recent fire. “If I can’t get to them [pointing at the consulate] what else can I do?!” he asks in tears.

So far protests outside of Chinese embassies and consulates and elsewhere in public squares and university campuses been reported in Sydney, Tokyo, Hong Kong, New York and Toronto according to news reports.

Inspired by the global response, Uyghurs living in Turkey also decided to join protests. One account on Twitter shared the following tweet:



Uyghurs in Turkey

Uyghurs who have managed to escape to Turkey enjoyed government support for their cause until President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan changed his tone with mainland China. “Following a sharp economic decline in the aftermath of a military coup in July 2016, Erdoğan’s tone changed. The national currency depreciated 29 percent, dealing the economy a major blow, as relations with the US soured and Turkey swapped its parliamentary system for a presidential one in 2018. The economy has hardly recovered since then,” wrote Filip Noubel, Global Voices Managing Editor in this piece in September 2021. China came to the rescue through generous loans, and other economic and commercial ventures. In 2017, Turkey’s Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu assured Chinese counterparts that Turkey won’t allow, “any activities targeting or opposing China,” promising to “take measures to eliminate any media reports targeting China.” Since 2016, the two countries have signed ten bilateral agreements.

The sudden U-turn was most recently reflected in Turkey’s decision to refuse citizenship to some Uyghur refugees, with local authorities, “telling them they were suspected risks to Turkey’s ‘national security’ or ‘social order,’” according to Voice of America reporting. Others have reportedly been refused asylum and long-term residency. There have also been reports of deportations via third countries. Turkey is home to the largest Uyghur diaspora in the world since the

1950s. Some estimates put the number of Uyghurs living in Turkey at 50,000.

Citizenship refusal is not the only reported fear. Although Turkey is yet to ratify an extradition treaty that the two countries signed in 2017, and was ratified by China in 2020, Uyghurs living Turkey fear it can serve as a “legal window for the deportation from Turkey.” According to China’s vice minister of foreign affairs, Le Yucheng, when the two countries were negotiating the treaty, they disagreed over the time stamp on the status of the nationality of the person(s) requested for deportation according to Voice of America reporting at the time:

Turkey proposed that if the person requested for extradition had acquired the nationality of the requested country when the extradition request was made, the person should be recognized as a national of the requested country. The Chinese side, however, argued such a proposition could encourage criminals to evade extradition by changing their nationality.

Eventually, both sides agreed “not to specify the time for nationality recognition in the treaty, but to hand it over to the competent authorities in accordance with their respective domestic laws in practice.”

In a statement issued by the World Uyghur Congress in December 2020, Turkey was urged not to ratify the treaty. “If adopted by Turkey, the extradition treaty is likely to become another instrument of persecution for China, aiding the Chinese

government in its coordinated efforts to forcibly return Uyghurs living abroad,” read the statement.

But even deportations ring hollow when stories of scores of activists living in Turkey who have spoken up about what is happening back in China have received death threats from the Chinese consulate in Istanbul while weekly disappearances

are common in Uyghur communities living in Istanbul.

All of this only amplifies the importance of today’s demonstration outside the Chinese Consulate in Istanbul as reprisals for something that would be common in other parts of the world can be far more dangerous for the Uyghurs living in Turkey.

BAYRAQ: Wake Up America, By Locking Uyghurs In A Burning Building, China Has Shown Its True Face

You read the title correctly. Uyghurs on three floors of a residential building in Urumqi were burned alive, and those on the top four floors suffocated. When the fire broke out at 19:47, the residents in the building were awake, neighbors were awake, and the fire brigade was next door, yet the fire continued for three hours. So why didn’t they get out? Were the dead and injured shackled to the building?

The answer is yes. Although not restrained by handcuffs, they were trapped due to the zero-COVID lockdown. The doors of the building and all of its units were locked, and the fire door of the building was blocked.

Thus, residents could not escape their units. Mothers clung to children, and children clung to fathers, feeling one another’s pain as they said goodbye to the world. In the beginning, they were heard begging, “The building is on fire! We are on fire! Please open the door! Save us.” Although firefighters arrived within five minutes, they either did not or could not

enter the building.

The building was not only locked but also surrounded by layers of wood and barriers. Vehicles parked in front of the building had not been driven for months. In addition, some of their owners were in quarantine, so they could not move the vehicles. As a result, ambulances could not approach the building, and fire hoses could not spray water on the fire. People burned as the disaster spread. Neighbors who saw the incident could not stand the tears and cries, but could not help because they were in lockdown.

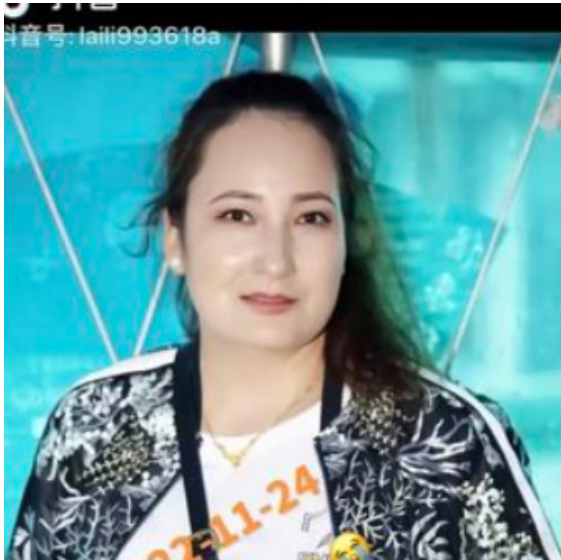
One of the saddest stories about the

victims is that while a woman named Qembernisa was burning to death with her three children, her husband and eldest son, who were sentenced to 10 and 12 years in prison, respectively, were not with them. Her burned five-year-old daughter was born while her father was in prison, and her father had not seen her yet. The girl was counting the months and years until she saw her father and older brother. What a calamity this is. Six members of a family were erased in two campaigns of the “superpower” of China — two during a campaign against extremists and four during the zero-COVID campaign.

As a human being and a religious believer, I remember God and His intentions.

It is clear that God, who created and regulated the universe and the human body, would not have given such a huge tragedy to a family without reason. None of the members of this family had killed or risked hundreds or thousands of lives – their lack of fame is a testament to this. They did not go astray or lead thousands of others astray – they were unable to commit such atrocities. So was this a signal to Uyghurs? No, it cannot because the Uyghur people have been in isolation for three months, in concentration camps for six years, and under occupation for seventy years. They have never had a chance to sin.

Is it a signal to the world? Maybe. Perhaps



God is telling the Muslim world the following: China has put millions of your brothers and sisters in camps where they are dying one by one, even if you cannot see it. They destroyed your mosques, even you couldn't see them. They burned your Qur'an, even though you couldn't smell it. Let me test your vigilance: Now that your brothers and sisters are being burned alive, what happens to your feelings and behaviors?

Perhaps God is calling the Western world more than anyone else

China's concentration camps appeared in satellite images, yet you didn't demand they close. The genocide order was revealed yet you didn't say to stop. The

police files were leaked, yet you didn't take action. Now we see this burning scene too. You knew that China committed genocide, you wrote reports, and you called them murderers. However, you held their hand, maintained your friendship, and embraced them in the G20. You turned a blind eye to the people who died in the camps. You did not sincerely sympathize with Uyghur activists crying at your door. You have religion and policies on human rights, so how can you ignore the cries of burning mothers? How can you remain silent while listening to the cries of burning children?

In particular, God is speaking to the USA with this incident: Your factories were



taken, your market was destroyed; your technology has been stolen, yet you are silent. You've witnessed the laws and regulations that you've drawn for the world being changed and destroyed, and you didn't speak up because the Chinese market is too lucrative. More than a million of your citizens died from COVID-19, which came from China. You did not dare reveal, even refer to the origin of the virus because you are too busy looking for enemies among your own countrymen. Whether you use the term "opponent" or "enemy," that is the true nature of the incoming superpower.

This is your opponent's path to ruling the whole world – including you. You were the leader of the peacekeeping forces in the world, so I will test your conscience: While your billionaires are making more billions in the Chinese market or thinking of making them, Uyghurs are on fire,

burning centimeter by centimeter. Do you still value money at the expense of innocent people's lives? If not ask yourself this question: If China is willing to do this to its own citizens, what do you think it is willing to do to you?

Let us finish this piece with demands of Uyghur demonstrators in front of Lincoln memorial:

"We know that the Chinese authorities, who are committing genocide in our homeland do not take responsibility for this on their own, so we call on the international community to send an independent investigation team to the region to determine the situation and bring China to the appropriate punishment."

Kok Bayraq is a Uyghur political dissident and journalist who left China after 'trouble with the authorities' and writes under a pseudonym to speak freely on the Uyghur genocide.

CHINA FORCING MARRIAGES BETWEEN MAJORITY HAN CHINESE AND ETHNIC MINORITY UYGHURS [SHOCKING DETAILS]

D China mixes financial, educational and career incentives with coercive measures such as threats to families under state policies to promote intermar-

China mixes financial, educational and career incentives with coercive measures such as threats to families under state policies to promote intermarriage between majority Han Chinese and ethnic minority Uyghurs in the restive East Turkistan, a new report by a Uyghur rights group has found.

The Uyghur Human Rights Project analysed Chinese state media, policy documents, government sanctioned marriage testimonials, as well as accounts from women in the Uyghur diaspora to state that government incentives with coercion to boost interethnic marriages has increased since 2014, RFA reported.

“The Chinese Party-State is actively involved in carrying out a campaign of forcefully assimilating Uyghurs into Han Chinese society by means of mixed marriages,” said the report.

China forcing marriages between majority Han Chinese and ethnic minority Uyghurs
China forcing marriages between majority Han Chinese and ethnic minority Uyghurs
IANS

The findings on forced marriages by the Washington-based NGO come as Western governments and the United Nations have recognised that Chinese policies in East Turkistan amount to or may amount to genocide or crimes against humanity.

Forced labour, incarceration camps and other aspects of China’s rule in East

Turkistan have drawn sanctions from Britain, Canada, the European Union and the United States, RFA reported.

The study, ‘Forced Marriage of Uyghur Women: State Policies for Interethnic Marriage in East Turkistan’, draws on state media propaganda films, state-approved online accounts of interethnic marriages and weddings, state-approved personal online testimonials from individuals in interethnic marriages, as well as government statements and policy directives.

“The Party-State has actively encouraged and incentivized ‘interethnic’ Uyghur-Han intermarriage since at least May 2014,” the Uyghur Human Rights Project said in the report.



Interethnic marriage policies gained momentum after Chinese President Xi Jinping announced a “new era” at the East Turkistan Work Forum in 2014, touting a policy of strengthening interethnic “contact, exchange, and mingling”, the report said, RFA reported.

“Uyghur-Han intermarriage has been increasing over the past several years since the Chinese state has been actively promoting intermarriage,” said Nuzigum Setiwaldi, a co-author of the report.

“The Chinese government always talks about how interethnic marriages promote ‘ethnic unity’ and ‘social stability’, but these actually are euphemisms for assimilation,” she said, RFA reported.

“The Chinese government is incentivising and promoting intermarriage as a way to assimilate Uyghurs into Han society and culture. Carrots include cash payments, help with housing, medical care, government jobs, and tuition waivers,” Setiwaldi said.

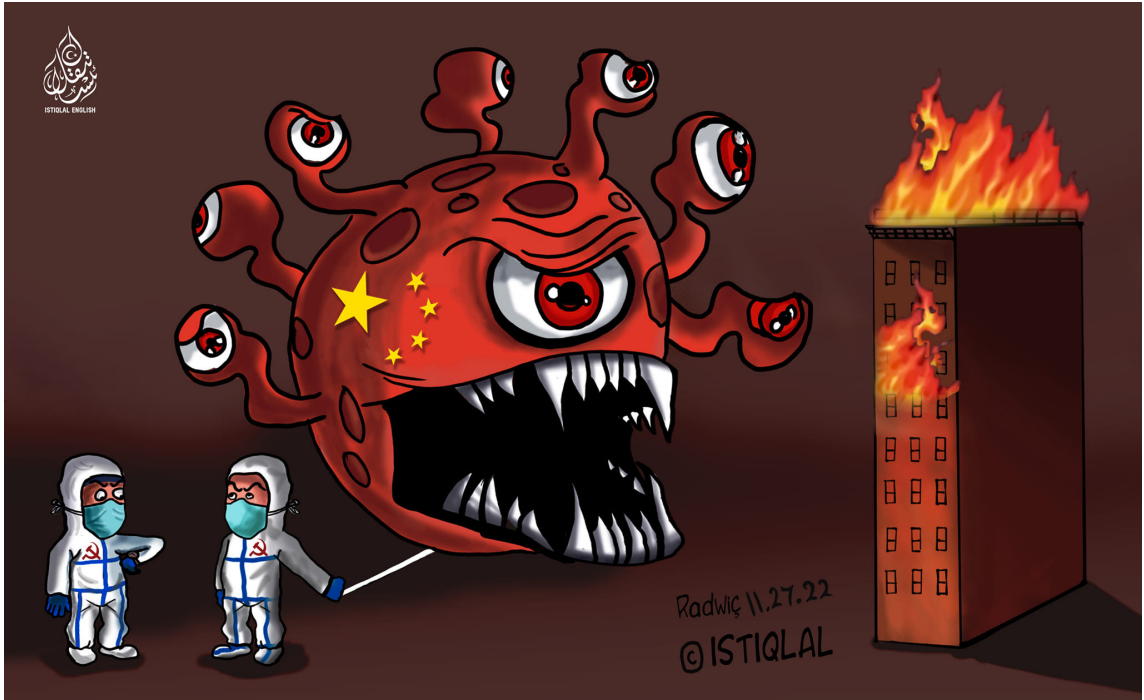
When it comes to sticks, “young Uyghur women and/or their parents face an ever-present threat of punishment if the women decline to marry a Han ‘suitor’,” the report said, citing experiences of Uyghur women now living in exile.

“Videos and testimonies have also raised concerns that Uyghur women are being pressured and forced into marrying Han men,” said Setiwaldi, RFA reported.



65 NGOs held a joint press release and protest in front of the Chinese Consulate against the invading Chinese regime's practice of genocide by locking people in their homes under the pretext of a nearly four-month quarantine in East Turkistan.





The Chinese regime's so-called "zero-covid" policy in East Turkistan is a pretext, the latest massacre in Urumq is the real purpose.



The East Turkistan people who are going through genocide by the Chinese regime and the painful reality

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What is happening in East Turkistan?

What is true and what is false?

The "ISTIQLAL" journal uses reliable sources, evidence and witnesses to reveal China's crimes against humanity and shine a light on the oppression in East Turkistan as well as exposing China's fake news propaganda.

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