



UYGHURS HAVE HIGHEST RATE OF IMPRISONMENT IN WORLD



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



TURKESTAN1933



ISTIQLALTVAR



EASTTURKISTANN



TURKISTAN.ALSHARQIA

UYGHURS HAVE HIGHEST RATE OF IMPRISONMENT IN WORLD

Uyghur Nursimangul Abdureshid, 34, poses for a photo during an interview with the Associated Press in Istanbul, Turkey, May 4, 2022. Abdureshid's brother, Memetali Abdureshid, who ran a car repair shop in Xinjiang, was sentenced to 15 years and 11 months in prison on charges of 'picking quarrels and provoking trouble' and 'preparing to carry out terrorist activities.'



An estimated 1 in 26 Uyghurs have been jailed, accounting for a third of China's prison population.

An estimated one in 26 Uyghurs in Xinjiang are behind bars, the world's highest rate of incarceration, according to a report by a Uyghur advocacy group.

Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples there are imprisoned at an estimated rate of 3,814 per 100,000 people — 47 times higher than China's overall rate of 80 per 100,000, the group said.

That's also more than three higher than in El Salvador, which has the world's highest known incarceration rate at 1,086 per 100,000 people, according to the April 25 report by the Uyghur Human Right Project, or UHRP.

All told, 578,500 Uyghurs or other Turkic people were in jail as of 2022, the group estimates. That's just over one-third of China's total prison population, even though they comprise only 1% of China's overall population. That figure is likely the same or higher today, the group says.

Another example is Gulshan Abbas, a retired Uyghur doctor and the sister of Rushan Abbas, a former Radio Free Asia employee and current executive director of Campaign for Uyghurs. She was sentenced to a lengthy prison term on "terrorism" charges after she disappeared along with another relative in September

2018.

The U.S. State Department has said that Dawut and other Uyghur intellectuals have been unfairly imprisoned for their work to protect and preserve Uyghur culture and traditions.

The report's findings are based on data from annual reports from the Xinjiang High People's Procuratorate — which prosecutes criminal defendants — and information published on the website of China's Ministry of Justice, covering the period 2017-2022. During that period, one in every 26 Uyghurs or members of other Turkic ethnicities in Xinjiang was incarcerated.

Many of those imprisoned have been convicted of crimes related to practicing Islam, such as studying the Quran when they were young or teaching it to others.

REALITY MAY BE WORSE

The actual situation in Xinjiang may even be worse, said UHRP senior researcher Ben Carrdus, who wrote the report.

"These are just people who have been put in prison. It doesn't include people who might still be in internment camps," he told Radio Free Asia, referring to the estimated 1.8 million Uyghurs and others arbitrarily detained in what the Chinese government said were vocational training centers.

The camps were, in fact, places where Uyghurs were subjected to political indoctrination and severe human rights abuses, including torture, the forced

sterilization of woman and forced labor.

China claims that the camps have been closed.

When China says it's ruled by law, it actually means that the law is whatever the Chinese Communist Party wants it to be, Carrdus said.



Rahile Dawut poses for a photo in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang, in August 2006. Dawut, a prominent Uyghur scholar specializing in Uyghur folklore and traditions, was sentenced to life in prison on the charge of 'splittism.'
(Lisa Ross via AP)

“Using laws doesn’t mean they are using justice. What they’ve done is use the instruments against the Uyghur people,” he said. “Thousands and thousands of people have been sentenced to prison mostly through the courts where China has used very unjust rules.”

The report indicates that Uyghurs experience higher death rates in prison than other ethnic groups in China, though death penalty figures are not publicly available because they are considered a state secret.

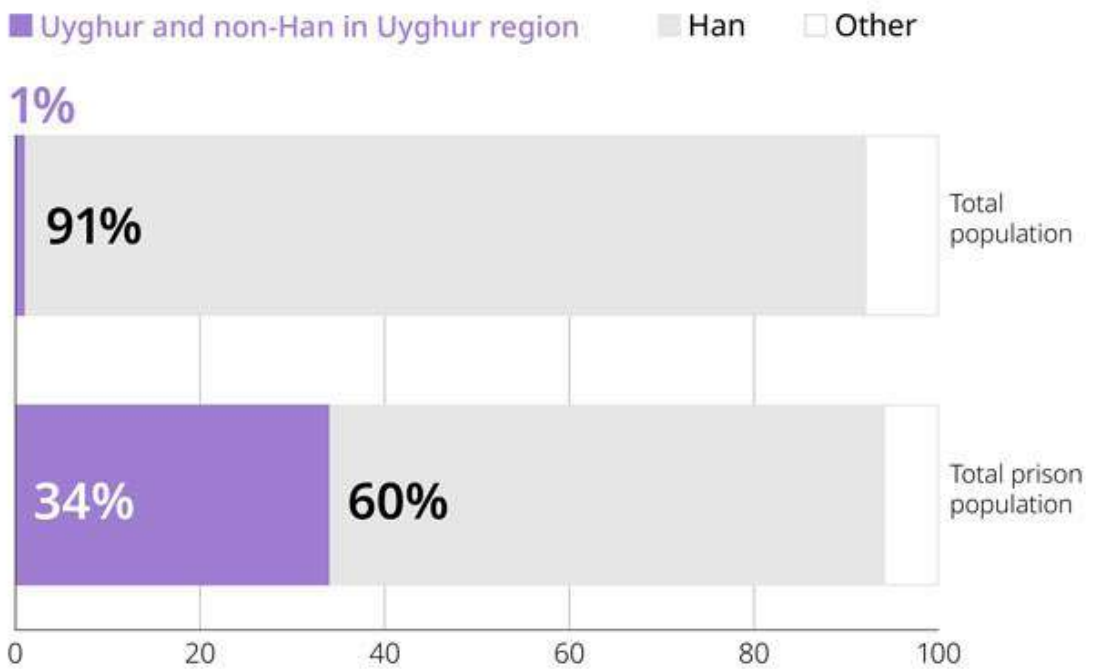
The UHRP believes Uyghurs receive severe sentences, such as at least 10 years in prison for minor actions like studying the Quran or teaching it to children, so that the rate of death sentences among them may be higher.

John Kamm, executive director of the U.S.-based human rights group The Dui Hua Foundation, emphasized the importance of highlighting the number of Uyghurs in prison to attract the attention of international media and governments in hope that they will push for their release.

Uyghurs incarcerated in China

While they make up **only 1%** of China’s total population, Uyghur and non-Han people in the Uyghur region constitute **more than one-third** of the country’s total prison population.

Ethnicities in China



Source: UHRP’s estimate based on China Statistical Yearbooks and Xinjiang High People’s Procuratorate, Graphic by Amanda Weisbrod / RFA

Carrdus urged the international community not to forget the Uyghurs.

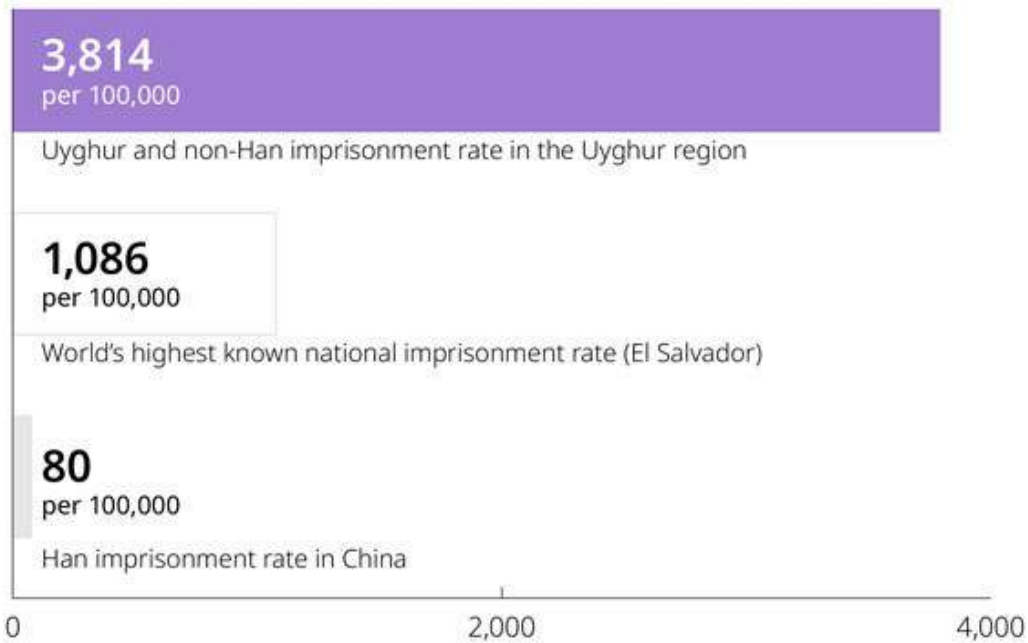
“I can say that with 100% confidence, things are not getting better,” he said, adding that although authorities in

Xinjiang have been closing down the internment camps, they’ve been sending Uyghurs to prisons instead.

Edited by Roseanne Gerin and Malcolm Foster.

Uyghurs are jailed at 3.5 times the world's highest national imprisonment rate

Non-Han people in the Uyghur region are **47 times** more likely to be incarcerated than China's Han majority.



Source: UHRP's estimate based on China Statistical Yearbooks and Xinxiang High People's Procuratorate, Graphic by Amanda Weisbrod / RFA.

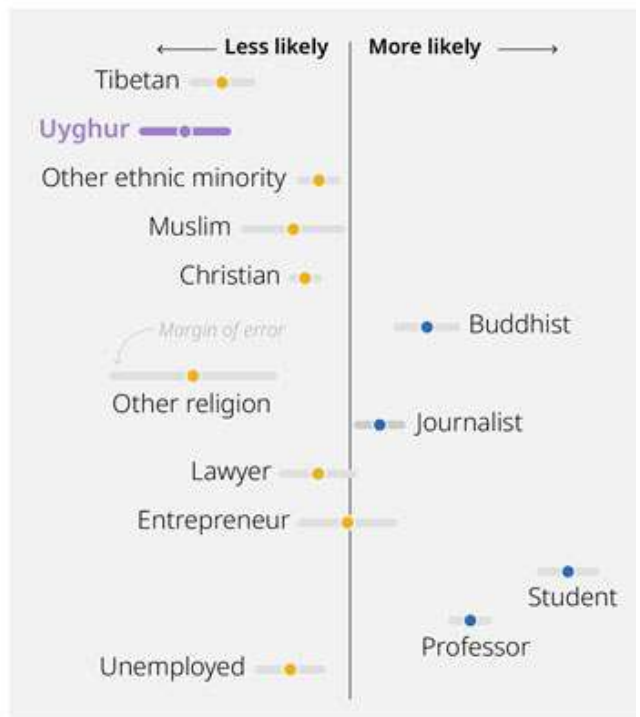




Uyghurs are less likely to be released from prison than other groups

On average, the probability of being released is **93% lower for ethnic Uyghurs** and 86% lower for ethnic Tibetans compared with ethnic Han prisoners.

In general, these minority groups are less likely to be released than prisoners of majority ethnic or religious groups.



Source: Conflict Management and Peace Science - Vol. 40 Issue 4 (2022), Graphic by Amanda Weisbrod / RFA

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS: CHINA HAS THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS IN PRISONS



“ —
Reporters Without Borders
released a report on the annual press
freedom index, and China’s press
freedom ranked eighth in the world,
and the number of journalists
imprisoned in Chinese prisons
ranked first in the world.

— ”

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released the 2024 World Press Freedom Index on World Press Freedom Day on May 3, and China ranked 173 out of 180 countries and regions. According to Reporters Without Borders, the Paris-based organization, the number of journalists imprisoned in China remains the highest in the world.

The report shows that China continues to tightly control and censor information, and not only kidnaps the most journalists in the world, but also continues to tightly control media channels. It strictly controls online content and strictly prohibits the dissemination of sensitive or anti-Chinese regime propaganda. Compared to 2023, restrictions on press freedom in China have worsened.

Reporters Without Borders advocacy specialist Alexandra Bialakowski said in a telephone interview with Voice of America:

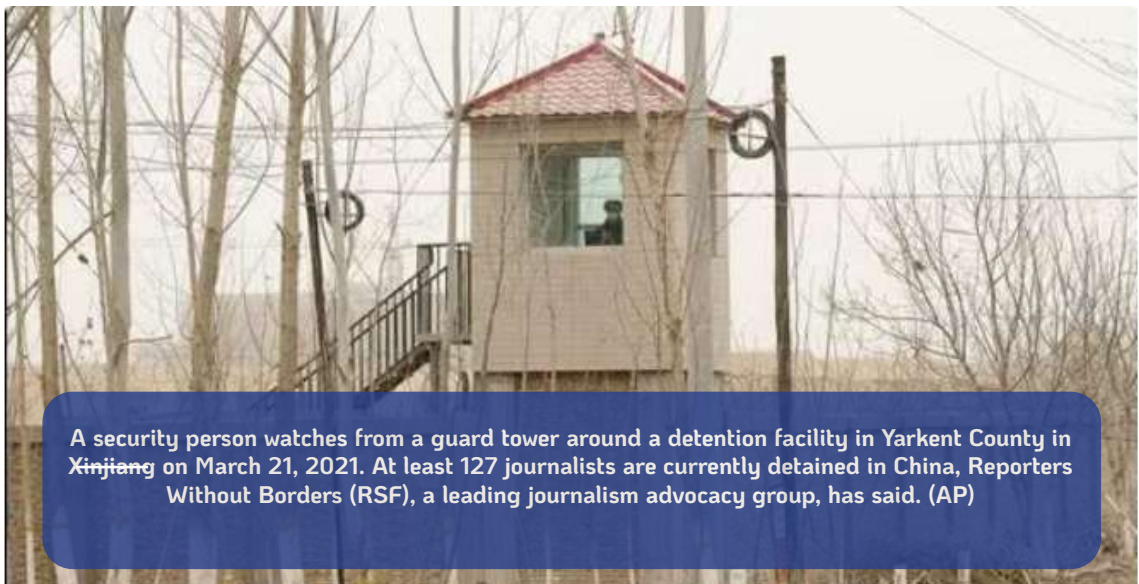
“The situation in China has not improved at all. China is still the country with the most jailed journalists in the world, with 119 journalists currently imprisoned.

He also told reporters: “We see a deterioration in security, and there has been no improvement in China’s treatment of journalists.” He pointed out that, in fact, the human rights situation in China has become worse than before. Even simple topics that were allowed to be reported in the past are now not allowed to be reported.

Worst jailers of journalists in 2023:

China 44	Vietnam 19	Egypt 13
Myanmar 43	Israel 17	Turkey 13
Belarus 28	Iran 17	Saudi Arabia 10
Russia 22	Eritrea 16	

There are 320 journalists jailed worldwide for doing their job.



A security person watches from a guard tower around a detention facility in Yarkent County in Xinjiang on March 21, 2021. At least 127 journalists are currently detained in China, Reporters Without Borders (RSF), a leading journalism advocacy group, has said. (AP)

RIGHTS GROUP: CHINA IMPRISONS MORE THAN 449,000 UYGHURS IN EAST TURKISTAN



Chinese President Xi Jinping (C) meets with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (2L) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday. Blinken paid a three-day visit to China.
Photo by Shen Hong/EPA-EFE/XINHUA

April 26 (UPI) -- As Secretary of State Antony Blinken wrapped up his trip to China, a human rights group released a report calculating that China currently imprisons more than 449,000 Uyghurs in Xinjiang, about one in 17.

According to the Uyghur Human Rights Project, a Washington-based research and advocacy group, 1 in 26 Uyghurs and non-Han people in the Xinjiang were incarcerated in 2022.

The group's analysis of leaked Chinese data, released Thursday, also estimated that 1 in 17 Uyghur adults in the region were imprisoned for actions that would be protected in a democracy, such as reading the Quran.

While the Uyghur, a minority Muslim group, and non-Han population in Xinjiang made up only 1% of China's overall population, the report indicated, the ethnic minority in the Uyghur Region account for 34% of the country's estimated prison population.

Blinken said Friday he raised concerns about "human rights abuses in Xinjiang" and other cases in his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and China's Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong.

However, Beijing criticized Blinken for

interfering in China's domestic affairs.

"We ask the U.S. not to put fingers on domestic affairs, including those relevant to Tibet and Xinjiang," an official of the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement Friday. "Do not use human rights as excuses to interfere."

China's official report on Chinese President Xi's summit with Blinken, which was published by the official Xinhua news agency, did not mention human rights.

Before Blinken's trip to China, the State Department published its 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices on Monday. In the chapter that covers China, the State Department reported that genocide and crimes against humanity occurred in 2023 against Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang.

The U.S. annual report further indicated that the conditions in penal institutions, including those for political prisoners, generally were harsh and often life-threatening or degrading.

"Prisoners often reported sleeping on the floor because there were no beds or bedding," the report said, "In many cases ventilation, heating, lighting, and access to potable water were inadequate."

REMEMBERING THE BARIN TOWNSHIP UPRISING

“

On 5 April every year, Uyghurs and their supporters around the world commemorate the anniversary of the Barin Township Uprising, which occurred in 1990 in Aqtu county, near Kashgar city. The uprising was a remarkable example of Uyghur resistance to Chinese Communist Party (CCP)- enforced Sinicisation in occupied East Turkistan. [1]

”



Armed occupying Chinese personnel patrol the streets in a photograph believed to have been taken during the uprising

CONTENTS

PEACEFUL PROTEST TURNED INTO VIOLENT CHINESE RESPONSE

NEVER FORGET!

The CCP had restricted Islamic worship, forced abortions of Uyghur women, and encouraged Han-Chinese inward migration to alter the demographic balance. [1] Hundreds of Uyghur youth, farmers, and ordinary men fighting for the honour and dignity of their families mobilised in protest against this oppression, initially expressing their grievances peacefully.

PEACEFUL PROTEST TURNED INTO VIOLENT CHINESE RESPONSE

The leader of the revolt, Zeydin Yusuf, reportedly wrote a letter to the CCP to convey the protesters' concerns. [1]

This peaceful overture was reportedly met by heightened oppression by the CCP, prompting the protesters to revolt and occupy several government buildings.

The CCP securitised the protesters and labelled them "terrorists", while deploying a huge military arsenal to quell the uprising. [2] Uyghur reports estimate that 18,000 military and police officials,



In this undated photograph, Chinese personnel appear to be holding a number of protesters in custody

Bingtuan, and the air force, were sent to recapture the government buildings from roughly 500 protesters. [1] After a stand-off lasting between 3 to 5 days, the majority of protesters were martyred.

The CCP's violent suppression of the uprising did not stop with the killing of the protesters. They also conducted mass arrests. Roughly 3,000 Uyghurs were detained while circa 200 were subsequently sentenced to death. [3] Uyghur relatives insist that the arrests and trials were surrounded in opacity. It was not clear whether everyone who was arrested had actually participated in the

uprising.

The injustices of the Barin Township trials are illustrated in the case of Mahat Hasan, who was arrested on 15 April 1990, held in detention for two years, and then sentenced to life imprisonment. [3] His relatives told the media that they were not permitted to attend the trial, nor were they told what crime Mahat supposedly committed. He died in prison in 2011.

NEVER FORGET!

Those who support Uyghur freedom must not forget the struggles of the Barin Township protesters.



The early blueprint for the ongoing genocide was laid in Barin Township. Its traces resonate to this very day in the measures implemented across East Turkestan to control the Uyghur population and remove their Islamic and Turkistani cultural identities.

While Muslim governments have largely failed the Uyghurs [4], Muslim civil society stands in solidarity with the oppressed.

Thousands of miles away in Bangladesh in 2022, hundreds of Muslim ulama and activists held a series of protests to remember the martyrs of Barin Township and other Uyghurs who lost their lives in the ongoing genocide. [5]

May Muslims around the world continue to remember the legacy of Barin Township, this year and beyond.

‘I COULDN’T REMAIN SILENT’ SON FIGHTS FOR UYGHUR JOURNALIST’ RELEASE FROM CHINESE PRISON



The last time Bahram Sintash saw his journalist father was in 2017. Qurban Mamut, an influential Uyghur editor had come to the United States for a visit but upon his return to Xinjiang, he disappeared.

Sintash later learned that his father had been swept up in China’s 2017 crackdown on Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim ethnic groups. China has said its policies in Xinjiang, which involve reeducation camps, forced sterilization, and family separations, are in the name of counter-terrorism, but 51 United Nations member countries have accused the government of “crimes against humanity.”

Mamut, as a prominent intellectual who edited the state-owned Xinjiang Civilization and Tepakkur magazines, was sentenced to 15 years for “political crimes,” according to news reports. According to Sintash, his father’s decades of journalism drew the attention of the Chinese government in its efforts to quash the Uyghur cultural industry.

After initially fearing that speaking out could harm his 74-year-old father’s case, Sintash decided to go public about the detention in 2018; in 2020, he joined the U.S. Congress-funded Radio Free Asia (RFA) in Washington, D.C. to be a “voice of voice-less Uyghurs.”

CPJ spoke with Sintash about his father’s love of journalism, restrictions on the press in Xinjiang, and what he knows of Mamut’s detention. This interview has been edited for length and clarity. The

Chinese foreign ministry did not reply to CPJ’s email requesting comment on Mamut’s arrest and sentencing.

What can you tell us about your father’s detention?

I initially thought my father was detained in 2018, but later learned it was actually in late 2017. Communication with my family in Urumqi [the capital of Xinjiang] has been severed since then, with China cutting off our ability to talk in late 2017 and early 2018. My mother told me, “We can no longer talk to you,” leaving me without any information about my father. In September of the following year, I sought to find out what had happened to him. Eventually, one of my neighbors who also lives overseas informed me that my father had been taken away from our neighborhood. This neighbor had heard the news from their family who witnessed my father being taken from his home. I was shocked by this revelation.

At the same time, I was considering what actions to take. I felt that raising my voice was the right decision, but I was extremely cautious. I was unsure of the exact steps to take or the words to use, as anything I said could potentially endanger my father further, given China’s unpredictable actions.

What was the media environment like in Xinjiang before your father’s arrest?

In 2016, a well-known writer, Yalqun Rozi, was detained and later sentenced to 15 years [for attempting to subvert the Chinese state], a fate similar to that of my father. My father visited the United States in January 2017 and stayed for a month, during which time he learned about the detention of Yalqun, a close friend. Yalqun had not been sentenced at that point but was under arrest, likely due to his publication of sensitive topics.

Yalqun had written extensively on various subjects, including Uyghur welfare, and had contributed many essays to my father's journal, *Xinjiang Civilization*. Their past collaboration made my father

concerned that Yalqun's arrest might not be an isolated case.

Yalqun's detention marked the beginning of a broader crackdown on Uyghur intellectuals. China targeted Uyghur intellectuals first in order to more successfully repress Uyghur identity. They began by arresting individuals and then expanded their investigation to a larger network of Uyghurs.

My father understood that this could happen, but we were uncertain about China's next steps. After 2017, under [Chinese President] Xi Jinping's leadership, the situation became increasingly dire, reflecting the tense



atmosphere of that time.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT XINJIANG CIVILIZATION, THE MAGAZINE YOUR FATHER EDITED FROM 1985 UNTIL 2017?

The content in the magazine mainly focuses on culture, history, current affairs, the identity of Uyghurs, examining the shortcomings of the Uyghur nation and society, and opinion pieces. This was the main content before 2017, primarily when my dad was the sole editor-in-chief. Interestingly, all the names of the journal's editorial board members were removed in the third issue of 2017 just half a month before the mass detentions began in 2017. The content of the journal dramatically changed in its last publication. It now became filled with red Communist propaganda. Many of the members on the board were subsequently taken to re-education camps, including my dad. At least two of other members, Abduqadir Jalalidin and Arslan Abdulla, as well as my dad were sentenced to long prison terms.

Before the magazine's third issue in 2017, its content mainly focused on Uyghur culture and literary works. However, after that issue, it primarily began publishing political content, which mostly revolves around studying Xi Jinping's ideology. The next editor even wrote an open letter titled "Protecting the security of the ideological sphere is my priority," in which he promised not to publish anything promoting "separatism," "terrorism," or "two-faced" behavior. The letter followed

two articles written by Uyghur officials calling the readers to "protect the unity of the nations with hearts and protect the homeland with loyalty."

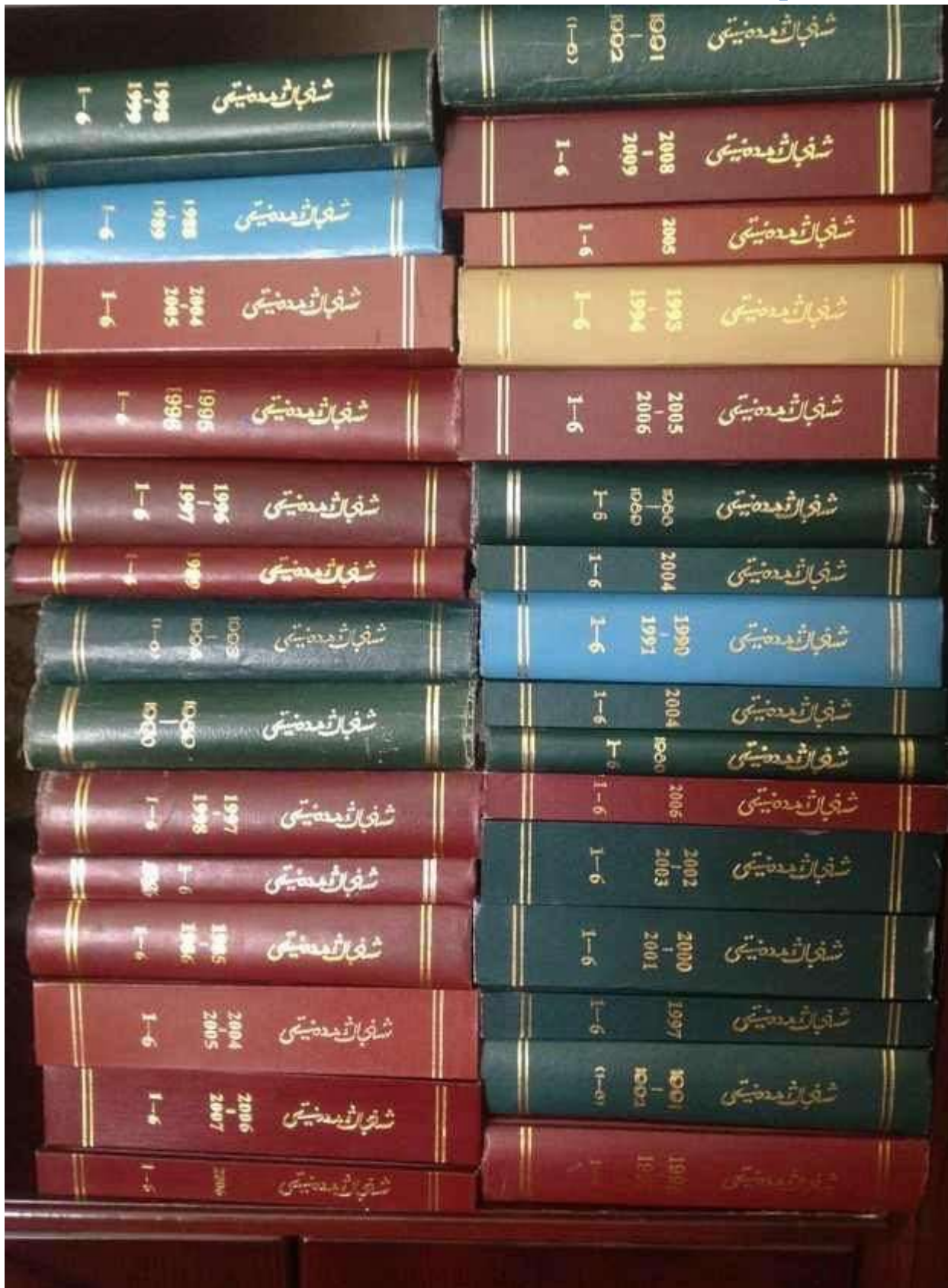
WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S RELATIONSHIP TO HIS JOURNALISTIC WORK?

My father was the sole editor; there were no secondary editors. However, he had two assistants who could be considered as secondary editors, but their main role was typing and assisting with computer-related tasks. My father worked tirelessly, often putting in 16-hour days. He would work at the office, come home for a quick meal, and then continue working late into the night, spending countless hours at his desk.

YOUR FATHER WAS QUITE WELL KNOWN FOR HIS JOURNALISM. HOW WAS HE SEEN IN THE UYGHUR COMMUNITY?

My father was an exceptional teacher, not through writing himself, but by curating and compiling works from other writers. He focused on selecting the right topics, aiming to present the truth without imposing his own opinions on the journal.

He steered clear of politics, especially avoiding any praise of the Chinese Communist Party or spreading its propaganda, which some writers and editors did to secure better positions and ensure their safety. My father, however, sought out authentic voices who could present genuine work, which is why the journal promoted many unknown writers who eventually became famous. The



platform allowed them to express the truth.

While my father didn't publicly express his own views, he was frequently interviewed on TV talk shows due to his extensive knowledge of Uyghur culture. These appearances contributed to his fame. During the 1990s and 2000s, there was a period when Uyghurs enjoyed a degree of freedom to discuss their identity, language, and other aspects of their culture — a stark contrast to the current situation.

DID YOUR FATHER FACE RETRIBUTION FOR HIS JOURNALISM BEFORE HIS IMPRISONMENT?

My father was called in for questioning in 2004, although he didn't face persecution or punishment. This was related to an opinion piece published in his journal about the Uyghur language. At that time, Xinjiang authorities were starting to phase out the Uyghur language from schools and universities, replacing it with Chinese in subjects like mathematics and other majors.

The writer of the piece was arrested, and my father was questioned by the security bureau and China's intelligence department. To avoid worrying us, my father never shared the full details of what happened.

YOU BELIEVE YOUR FATHER WAS ARRESTED FOR HIS JOURNALISM. WHY?

After his retirement in 2011 [from Xinjiang Civilization], my father didn't

stop working. He continued to serve on the editorial board of Xinjiang Civilization, and became the head editor of a newly established magazine called Tepakkur. The magazine, published by the state-run Xinjiang Juvenile Publishing House, or Chiso, gained popularity due to my father's reputation. "Tepakkur" means "think." My father, invited to be the editor-in-chief, established this magazine to have more freedom and flexibility in selecting topics. It was not available digitally, only in print, and this was just before the mass arrests began around 2014-2015. As a result, I don't have a copy and haven't read the articles, but the journal was well-regarded by its readers.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR WORK AT RFA? HAS YOUR FATHER'S IMPRISONMENT MADE YOU RETHINK YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY, ESPECIALLY WHILE COVERING XINJIANG?

I joined RFA because my fear diminished as I became more vocal in advocating for other Uyghurs. I couldn't remain silent; I had to speak the truth. My mindset became open, ready to face any challenge. Many Uyghurs, concerned for their safety and their families', avoid RFA and don't pursue journalism there. But for me, there were no limits. I saw RFA as the only true voice for Uyghurs worldwide, so I joined to work for my people.

As for my efforts to free my father, it's been an emotionally challenging task. I've been in constant communication with organizations, governments, NGOs, and even the United Nations, explaining my

father's situation and speaking to the media. My work extends beyond my father to all Uyghurs and our culture, which I learned to preserve from my father.

Editor's note: CPJ did not include Qurban Mamut in its previous prison censuses because its researchers at the time could not confirm that his arrest was journalism related.

Iris Hsu is CPJ's China representative. Prior to joining CPJ, Hsu interned at Human Rights Watch, Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation, and the Atlantic Council. Hsu obtained her master's degree in international affairs from American University. She speaks Mandarin and French and lives in Taipei.



Qurban Mamut (left) and Bahram Sintash (second from left) with their family in Xinjiang, China in 1989.
(Photo: Courtesy of Bahram Sintash)

UYGHURS: DO NOT FORGET THERE IS ALSO AN ECONOMIC GENOCIDE



Artificially impoverished in their own land, Uyghurs sometimes manage to offer a glimpse of the truth through social media.

Two weeks after China organized a visit of East Turkistan (Xinjiang to China) by representatives of Arab countries, who expressed their “persuasion” that the Uyghur genocide was just Western propaganda, screams began to be heard on the internet about the economic repercussions of the same genocide. [Note: Not all links corresponding to the posts are still working, or working from all browsers].

POST 1: IN A POST DATED APRIL 13, WE SEE A UYGHUR LADY CRYING AND SAYING: “LOOK, THEY TOOK OUR LAND, AND WHEN WE COMPLAINED, THEY REJECTED US BY SAYING ‘THE LAND BELONGS TO THE STATE’. HOW DO WE FEED OURSELVES? HOW WILL WE EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN? IS THERE ANY JUSTICE IN THE WORLD? IS THERE ANY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD THAT WILL CARE ABOUT US, AN INSTITUTION THAT WILL ADDRESS

OUR PROBLEMS?”

Interestingly, this voice was not coming from Palestine or Ukraine, countries that are at war but where there is still freedom of the press. This complaint comes from a region where free press is completely banned, and thousands go to jail simply for spreading “negative information.”

Just a week ago, the Chinese government announced that it had punished eight people for spreading negative messages. It warned citizens not to distribute negative news through the Internet. In the past, the entire Kashgar Prefecture was shaken when the news that a person died under a collapsed wall was leaked to the public.

WHAT WAS THE SOURCE OF THIS WOMAN’S COURAGE AND WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS?

She tells us that, “I have no choice, I finally decided to solve my problem by going

public on DouYin” (the Chinese version of TikTok). Yet, this is not enough to understand the deep source of her crying.

The post continues: “I got heart disease because of poverty and last year I received treatment for 80,000 yuan. We are tired of this life. The death is more comfortable than this endless pain for us. The government is strong, it has enough power, let them shoot us, let them kill us all!!!!”

To me, these voices are actually echoes of the genocide in the economic field.

Let’s look at the problem itself mentioned in the post.

POST 2: IN A POST DATED APRIL 6, A DIFFERENT LADY FROM BAYTOKAY TOWN, GHULJA (YINING) COUNTY, SPOKE WITH A CAUTIOUS VOICE: “LOOK, THEY WILL TAKE OUR LAND AND DESTROY OUR FIELDS WITHOUT GIVING US EVEN A PENNY. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THIS!!!!???”

As reported by comments following these two video clips, Chinese authorities have implemented a policy of “concentrating land in the hands of agricultural experts” since the 2000s. As a result, the lands passed from the Uyghurs, the native people of the region, to Han immigrants, the dominant ethnic group. This concentration has turned Uyghurs into slave laborers living with low payments and dependent on Chinese “experts.” These situations and what the “experts” really brought can be seen by analyzing additional posts.

POST 3: A MAN DESCRIBES THE FARMERS IN A TOMATO PLANTATION: “LOOK, TODAY IS FIRST DAY OF THE HOLIDAY, THESE PEOPLE ARE WORKING, HOW HARD-WORKING PEOPLE ARE THESE?! GUYS, DON’T FORGET, HOW YOUR PARENTS MAKE MONEY TO GROW YOU!”

In Islam, celebrating the Eid holiday cheerfully is a part of worship, an expression of spiritual contentment. How can a Muslim community give up celebrating a religious holiday and work on those days? An Islamic teacher answered: “When the community is faced with a struggle of life and death.”

POST 4: DATED APRIL 11. TWENTY OR THIRTY PEOPLE ARE RUNNING AFTER AN AUTOMOBILE DISTRIBUTING TOMATO PLANTS IN THE FIELD. THEY COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER TO GET AS MANY PLANTS AS POSSIBLE. THIS SCENE IS REMINISCENT OF THE HUNDREDS OF AFGHANS RUNNING AFTER THE PLANES AT THE AIRPORT WHILE THE U.S. WAS WITHDRAWING FROM AFGHANISTAN. BUT WHILE AFGHANS HAD A (LIMITED) CHANCE TO ESCAPE THE THREAT THEY FACED, UYGHURS DO NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN LIVING IN AN IRON CAGE FOR DECADES. CHINESE OFFICIALS MAY PRESENT THIS SCENE AS A DESIRE OR ENTHUSIASM TO EARN MORE MONEY AFTER HAVING BEEN “REEDUCATED” AT A “VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER,” AS THEY SAY IN THEIR PRESS CONFERENCES.

HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE REAL REASON IS NEED. ONE TO FIVE MEMBERS OF EACH FAMILY ARE DETAINED IN THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS ESTABLISHED IN THE REGION. POST 5 AND OTHERS CLEARLY SHOW THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACES ARE WOMEN: MEN ARE IN THE CAMPS.

POST 6: DATED APRIL 27, IT SHOWS HOW DIFFICULT ARE THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS. THEY CONTINUE TO WORK DESPITE THE WIND AND COLD. THEY CRAWL OR LIE ON THE GROUND WHILE WORKING. MUSIC FROM THE MOVIE “TRAMP” WAS ALSO ADDED TO THE CLIP, REFLECTING THE PEOPLE’S CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION.

None of these scenes were shown to

“visitors.” Some “visitors,” excited by seeing the magnificent infrastructure in the region, praised it as evidence of “people-centric” developments. Which people were they referring to? Which was in the center? The Uyghurs or the Hans? The Chinese regime does not want to make such a distinction. It is busy building its myth of a single nation called “Zhonghua Minzu” (Chinese Homeland), but one fact remains, that Uyghurs and Han Chinese are two completely different people with separate origins, languages, religions, and (resentful) past.

Even though China has organized more than 1000 visits to cover up this fact, this “evil tool” we call social media sometimes does not listen to China, and reveals these facts immediately after those



From Post 5: most workers are women.

visits. It gives the following message to the visitors: the Uyghur society is not made out just of those you have seen singing and dancing. There are those who are suffering in the camps, their family members crying for bread, a society condemned to forget religious holidays. If your intention to learn about our situation is real, come not as pro-regime, but pro-human, not by joining an orchestrated visit, but independently.

Of course, these are just some echoes of the economic sphere of the genocide that leaked onto social media around the Ramadan holiday. There would be much more to discuss, including the natural resources taken away without the consent of native people, the commercial opportunities usurped, and the disasters all this caused. All realities the “visitors” would never see.



Experts say the measure could presage another major crackdown in Xinjiang.

Authorities in Xinjiang have banned Uyghurs from using social media apps including Chinese-owned TikTok and tools to circumvent censorship, according to a video released from Chinese police, in what experts say could be the beginning of another major crackdown on the region's 11 million mostly Muslim Uyghurs.

A video notice about the ban was released April 8 by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a state-run economic and paramilitary organization also known

as Bingtuan that has played a key role in suppressing the Uyghurs.

Violators face arrest, a fine of 15,000 yuan, or US\$2,100, and a 40-point deduction under China's social credit system, which affects people's access to credit and business opportunities, according to the video.

In addition to TikTok, people are forbidden from downloading and using X, formerly Twitter, and YouTube, and buying and



selling on the cryptocurrency platform Bitcoin, it said.

The announcement "suggests a significant likelihood of another round of mass oppression by China," said Ilshat Hassan

Kokbore, vice chairman of the executive committee of the World Uyghur Congress.

Bingtuan police also warned against using virtual private networks, or VPNs, or server accelerator cards, which

get around China’s “Great Firewall” of government internet censorship.

Authorities are also broadcasting the warning against using foreign websites and apps across radio stations, televisions and social media platforms in Xinjiang, said a foreign businessman who works in the region, but declined to be named for fear of retribution.

Chinese police are conducting impromptu checks of phones in Uyghur homes and hotels, leading to abductions, he said.

PIVOTAL ROLE IN OPPRESSION

Bingtuan police and armed security forces participated in the mass arrests and detentions of Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in internment camps and

prisons that began around 2017, which the United States and some Western parliaments have labeled a genocide.

A December 2023 report by the Uyghur Human Rights Project on the police surveillance structure in Xinjiang identifies the People’s Armed Police and the Bingtuan as the primary perpetrators of the Chinese Communist Party’s genocide against the Uyghurs.

The latest ban came after a special meeting recently convened by Xinjiang’s Communist Party Committee, which stressed the need for “strictly maintaining secrecy related to Xinjiang.”

Sophie Richardson, former director of China affairs at Human Rights Watch,



said the new ban could indicate the failure of Chinese policies in Xinjiang.

“If the Chinese government really thought its policies were working well in the region, these kinds of threats and constraints simply wouldn’t exist,” she said.

SURVEILLANCE APPS

The new cyber restrictions are nothing new in Xinjiang.

According to news reports, China has amassed comprehensive information on Uyghurs in a large database and can monitor and track them around the clock.

Geoffrey Cain, a senior research fellow and policy director of the Tech Integrity Project and author of the book “The Perfect Police State,” said crackdowns always “start with apps,” but he added that the CCP itself has mastered the use of apps to collect data on China’s entire population.

“They learned to do it with the use of concentration camps, and to put people in those concentration camps they used mass data gathering from their apps,” he told RFA.

Chinese public security authorities have required Uyghurs with personal computers and smartphones to install “anti-fraud” spyware on devices.

Now if someone tries to download foreign social media apps such as X or to use a VPN, the software immediately alerts police, who have the authority to freeze users’ bank accounts and terminate their phone service, Cain said.

Forcing people in Xinjiang and the rest of China to install spy apps shows that Chinese authorities are worried about political stability and they want to create a total security state by seeing “every person’s thinking, every person’s ideology,” he said.

DENYING THE UYGHUR GENOCIDE

Kokbore pointed out that Chinese government officials widely use social media platforms such as TikTok, X and Facebook to deny the Uyghur genocide.

“China is putting efforts to conceal the ethnic genocide in the Uyghur region by tightly controlling information and punishing Uyghurs arbitrarily,” he said.

Kokbore also noted the presence of X accounts with Uyghur profile photos that promote the Chinese government’s narrative of Uyghurs living happy lives under Chinese policies. Chinese reporters then use such platforms to conceal the atrocities.

Some U.S. lawmakers and government officials have determined that TikTok, a subsidiary of Chinese company ByteDance, poses a threat to U.S. national security.

The U.S. House of Representatives on March 13 passed legislation that will ban TikTok in the United States unless its parent company can find a buyer for it. To become law, the bill must clear the Senate, where other efforts to ban the short-video app have stalled.

References

<https://www.rfa.org>

<https://cpj.org/2024/04/i-couldnt-remain-silent-son-fights-for-uyghur-journalists-release-from-chinese-prison/>

<https://www.turkistanpress.com>

https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2024/04/26/uyghurs-imprisoned-report/5901714168977/

<https://bitterwinter.org/uyghurs-do-not-forget-there-is-also-an-economic-genocide/>

<https://turkistanpress.com/en/page/-34-the-oic-delegation-visited-east->



The Chinese regime forced Uyghur Muslims to eat and drink during holy month of Ramadan in East Turkistan

istiqlal

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 genocide crime and shine a light on the oppression in East Turkistan as well as expose China’s fake news propaganda.

Editor in Chief **Abdulvaris Abdulhalik**

Graphic Design **Radwa Adel**

Editor **Radwa Adel**

Caricature **Radwa Adel**

Editorial Board **East Turkistan Press And Media Association**

Publication Type **Monthly Journal**

Address **Kartaltepe Mah. Geçit Sok. No: 6 Dükkan 2
Sefaköy K.çekmece İSTANBUL**

info@istiqlalmedia.com

www.turkistantimes.com/en

www.istiqlalhaber.com

www.istiqlalmedia.com

+90 212 540 31 15

+90 553 895 19 33

+90 541 797 77 00