

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/032/2006

02 June 2006

UA 156/06 Fear of torture and ill-treatment/Detention without charge/Medical Concern

CHINA

- Ablikim Abdiriyim (m) aged 32**
- Alim Abdiriyim (m) aged 30**
- Rushangul Abdiriyim (f) aged 36**
- Kaysar (m) aged approx 38**
- Rayila (f) aged 24**
- Razia (f) aged 15**
- Sardar Kaysar (m) aged 9**
- Epar Alim (f) aged 4**
- Turghun (m) aged 8**

Ablikim, Alim and Rushangul Abdiriyim, the three adult children of ethnic Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer were reportedly detained by the police on the evening of 29 May in Urumqi, the regional capital of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR). They were forcibly escorted to a camp site called Nansan outside Urumqi where Ablikim Abdiriyim and Alim Abdiriyim were severely beaten by police officers. Ablikim lost consciousness and was taken to hospital for medical treatment. They reportedly remain in police custody, although their exact whereabouts and state of health are unclear. Amnesty International fears they are at risk of further torture or ill-treatment.

Six other members of Rebiya Kadeer's family, including four children (named above) were reportedly detained by the police at the same time. It remains unclear whether they are held in police detention facilities or are under police surveillance in their homes. According to the US-based Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), one of Rebiya Kadeer's grandchildren was reportedly able to telephone her on the morning of 1 June. She said she was frightened by the presence of seven police officers in her home and asked Rebiya Kadeer to 'rescue her'.

Ablikim, Alim and Rushangul Abdiriyim appear to have been detained to stop them meeting with a United States Congressional Team affiliated with the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus, which is currently visiting the XUAR at the invitation of the Chinese authorities. The official Chinese press, however, have reported that they were detained over financial irregularities in their mother's business. An official Norwegian human rights delegation is also due to visit the XUAR between 4-7 June prior to a session of the China-Norway human rights dialogue in Beijing.

Rebiya Kadeer's family have been subjected to harassment by the authorities following her initial detention in 1999 and particularly since her release from prison on medical parole on 17 March 2005. Since her release, the police have launched an investigation into alleged financial irregularities by her company, the Akida Trading Co in Urumqi. In September 2005, Chinese State Security officials asked Alim Abdiriyim, the managing director of the company to sign a document that would confirm that Rebiya Kadeer has evaded taxes, committed fraud and accumulated huge debts. They reportedly told him that if he did not agree to sign it immediately he would "sign it in prison after we've broken each one of your ribs". He has been detained several times since then, apparently in connection with this investigation.

Rebiya Kadeer has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. Amnesty International considers that the ongoing harassment and reports of torture or ill-treatment of Rebiya Kadeer's family cast serious doubt on the credibility of this investigation.

Rebiya Kadeer is a former Amnesty International prisoner of conscience, who was sent directly to the US following her release from prison. Prior to her release, she says she was warned that if she engaged with Uighurs or spoke publicly about "sensitive issues" after her release her "businesses and children will be finished". Rebiya Kadeer was recently elected President of the Uyghur American Association which established the UHRP.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA, the Chinese authorities have used the international "war on terror" as a pretext to justify their political crackdown in the region. This has resulted in serious human rights violations against the ethnic Uighur community in the XUAR, including the detention of alleged Uighur nationalists as 'separatists' or 'terrorists', the closure of unofficial mosques and the arrest of Imams.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible in Chinese, English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to disclose the whereabouts of the nine individuals named above, and release them immediately unless they are charged with a recognisably criminal offence;
- calling on the authorities to ensure they have access to lawyers of their choice, other family members and any necessary medical treatment pending their release;
- expressing deep concern about the alleged beating of Ablikim Abdiriyim and Alim Abdiriyim and calling on the authorities to launch a full, independent and impartial investigation into the allegations with a view to bringing those responsible to justice;
- requesting immediate guarantees for the safety of all nine individuals while they remain held by the police;
- urging the authorities to bring an end to human rights violations directed at members of Rebiya Kadeer's family, including arbitrary detention, police harassment and other restrictions on their freedom of expression and association.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli

The State Council

9 Xihuangcheng Genbeijie

Beijingshi 100032

People's Republic of China

Fax: + 86 10 65292345 (c/o Ministry of Communication)

Email: gazette@mail.gov.cn

Salutation: Your Excellency

Chairman of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional People's Government

Ismail TILIWALDI Zhuxi

Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Renmin Zhengfu

2 Zhongshanlu

Wulumuqishi 830041

Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

Email: master@xinjiang.gov.cn

Salutation: Dear Chairman

COPIES TO:

Mayor of Wulumuqi Municipal People's Government

Shokrat Zakir Shizhang

Wulumuqi Shizhengfu Bangongting

1316 Kelamayi Donglu

Wulumuqi Shi 830063

Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

Fax: + 86 991 4689654

Salutation: Dear Mayor

and to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 July 2006