

## **BRIEFING: China attempts to criminalize every aspect of Uyghur religious belief and practice**

For immediate release

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An April 16, 2014 notice posted on the Shayar County, Aksu Prefecture government website details how informants could receive a reward for reporting on local residents exhibiting one or more of 53 proscribed behaviors. Given that Uyghurs comprise 83% of Shayar's population, the notice appears targeted at Uyghurs in the county.

The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) has translated into English the entire document from Shayar County local authorities (see below) and believes the notice exacerbates tensions and suspicion between local residents through monetary enticement. According to government statistics, GDP per capita and average wages in Shayar County fall well below regional averages.

Informants could be rewarded with payments of 50 Yuan to 50,000 Yuan (8 USD to 8,000 USD) for notifying authorities of suspicious behaviors that include: distorting the facts of the unrest of July 5, 2009, "reactionary" speech, encouraging others to petition, and encouraging others to rally. The notice also specifies for potential informants 18 religious activities, including customary religious practices, indicating an unparalleled crackdown on religion in East Turkestan.

The publication of the document follows reports in the overseas media during the past year of a stepped up Chinese government campaign to repress religion in East Turkestan. These reports and the unprecedented nature of the restrictions detailed in the Shayar County notice reveal that since the publication of a [report](#) by the Uyghur Human Rights Project in May 2013 on religious repression, there has been a measurable deterioration in Uyghur religious freedom.

"The Chinese authorities' intensified drive to repress religious practice and belief among Uyghurs has led to a marked decline for religious freedom in the past year," said UHRP director, Alim Seytoff in a statement from Washington, DC. "The extent of the limits placed on Uyghur religious behavior now revealed in Shayar County tells us that the Chinese government will leave no stone unturned in curbing Uyghurs' rights to peaceful religious expression. The conflation between customary religious behaviors common to almost all Uyghurs with religious extremism means nearly every Uyghur is complicit in 'illegal religious activity' and forces Uyghur believers to abandon their faith in order to avoid state punishment."

A number of overseas media outlets, including [Reuters](#), the [Wall Street Journal](#) and [AFP](#) via UK-based The Telegraph, reported in late April 2014 how Shayar officials were offering rewards for information on "illegal religious activities" in the county, including an encouragement to alert authorities to Uyghurs wearing "bizarre dress" or men growing

beards. These articles appear largely based on an April 24, 2014 [report](#) published by the Chinese state run, Global Times. The Global Times report cited an individual at the state run Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences who claimed the Shayar notice would foster the maintenance of social stability and that it was a normal international practice to have such regulations.

The Global Times report also cited a Shayar official who admitted the new curbs on behavior were “more detailed” and “based on a previous notice from public security authorities.” After the widespread media coverage of the document, the notice was taken down from the Shayar County government website. Shayar County officials contacted by the [New York Times](#) were unwilling to respond to questions regarding the new measures.

UHRP director, Alim Seytoff added: “This notice effectively turns every Uyghur and their neighbor into government informants by watching and informing their every move to the authorities for money. It creates an atmosphere of distrust, betrayal and fear within Uyghur neighborhoods, towns and counties, such as Shayar, ensuring the kind of political stability Xi Jinping called for in his recent visit to East Turkestan.”

A thorough reading of the Shayar County restrictions discloses the unprecedented extent of the limits placed on Uyghur religious practices not captured in the media reporting cited above. While restrictions on “Islamic appearance” have been frequently [documented](#), curbs on the *Nikah* are new.

The *Nikah* is a fundamental part of Islamic marriage without which the marriage between a man and a woman is not recognized by the Islamic community. It is the religious duty of every Muslim, including the Uyghur people, to have *Nikah* for the recognition of their marriage. During the *Nikah* ceremony, an Imam officiates the marriage by asking both bride and groom whether each wants to marry the other, indicating free will. The Imam will also deliver a sermon at the wedding ceremony. The practice has become so firmly rooted in Uyghur religious and cultural practice that all Uyghurs marry with the *Nikah*. According to Uyghur traditions, without this religious aspect to the wedding ceremony, the couple’s marriage is not considered Islamic and carries an aspect of cultural embarrassment, as the marriage is not legitimate in the eyes of the Uyghur community. The new curbs on behavior from Shayar County deem a reading of the *Nikah* an attempt “to subvert implementation of the Marriage Law.” The Islamic process of divorce, *Talak*, is also deemed illegal under the same law, according to the Shayar County notice.

Other limits on religious expression, such as on fasting during Ramadan, mosque attendance and private religious education, outlined by the Shayar County government were also documented region wide in UHRP’s 2013 report on religious freedom in East Turkestan, [Sacred Right Defiled](#), and remain in effect to date.

A further sign that regulations governing religion have hardened in recent weeks is an April 14, 2014 [notice](#) issued by the Chinese Communist Party committee of Qartal Bazaar in Aksu City regarding the holding of an “unlawful” funeral ceremony for Nurdin Turdi, a loyal party official distinguished by the state. The notice, widely circulated on

social media, states that as Nurdin Turdi's funeral was held at a mosque and not at his home, his family was in contravention of regulations on funerals for individuals holding Turdi's status. As a consequence of the infraction, the funeral fees normally paid by the state to such individuals were rescinded and six months of benefits to the family withheld. Customarily, the state used to permit Islamic burials for any Uyghur who wished to have one.

Since the release of [Sacred Right Defiled](#) in May 2013, Radio Free Asia has reported a series of cases involving limits placed on Uyghur religious expression across East Turkestan, including: [Balaqsu](#), near Kashgar in May 2013; [Beshtugmen and Igerchi](#), near Aksu City in May 2013; [Uchturpan](#), in Aksu Prefecture in August 2013; [Shihezi](#) in November 2013; [Turpan](#) in April 2014; and in April 2014, the fourth extension to an original 12-year jail term handed down to Uyghur religious leader, [Abdukiram Abduveli](#). In an extraordinary move, the harshness of current religious policies prompted a [Uyghur delegate](#) to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to speak out during a March 2014 session.

The increased repression of religious practices and belief now underway corresponds with Chinese president, Xi Jinping's determination to implement a "[major strategic shift](#)" in East Turkestan that prioritizes security policies in the region. State rhetoric regarding the tightening of security is often accompanied by crackdowns on the "[three evil forces of separatism, extremism and terrorism](#)," which frequently target peaceful religious expression. In an April 30, 2014 Radio Free Asia [report](#), the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) called for China to remain a Country of Particular Concern on the US State Department's blacklist of religious freedom violators. USCIRF vice chair, Katrina Lantos Swett told Radio Free Asia: "any independent religious expression is targeted in China...unless practitioners of whatever faith basically submit to government-controlled religious organizations and religious worship, they are at risk of becoming a target."

A recent trip to East Turkestan by Xi Jinping concluded on April 30, 2014 reinforced the call for enhanced security measures. Xi [visited](#) People's Liberation Army soldiers and the People's Armed Police in Kashgar, a Uyghur majority city that he claimed was the [frontline](#) of counterterrorism. The visit to East Turkestan was preceded by comments given by Xi to the Politburo Central Committee regarding the need to toughen China's stance on terrorism. As reported by [AP](#), a proposed 2014 budget will increase regional public security spending to 1 billion USD (in 2010 it was 423 million USD according to the [New York Times](#)).

Universal religious freedom is protected under Article 18 of the normative human rights standards outlined in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). Other international instruments whose standards China is obliged to meet also ensure the right of religious freedom, such as the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#).

China's domestic laws, such as the [Constitution](#) and the [Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law](#), have strong provisions on freedom of religious belief. Despite this international and domestic legal framework, restrictions on religious freedom are deemed "lawful" by Chinese authorities through the strict implementation of local regulations that contradict China's own laws and international obligations.

UHRP urges multilateral organizations and concerned governments to act on China's repression of Uyghur religious rights and more vehemently remind China of the necessity to act as a responsible member of the international community, especially given its growing economic and political influence. Furthermore, UHRP believes pressure should be applied on China to sign and ratify the [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#) and to ratify the [International Convention on Civil and Political Rights](#).

### ***APPENDIX: UHRP Translation of Shayar County Announcement***

Shayar County Intelligence Information [Gathering] Award Announcement

2014-04-16 17:34

In order to conduct stability work well, social stability information work is a key element. Promptly reporting social stability information can actively prevent and precisely strike at all kinds of illegal crimes, and effectively safeguard the security of the country and the people's lives and property. In order to encourage all people to actively provide every type of clue, [we] now announce the county's intelligence information [gathering] reward method as follows:

Each and every one who provides social stability information whose truth can be verified by inspection will receive different rewards ranging from 50-50,000 yuan based on standards based on the type and rank of the information. The specific divisions are:

I. For providing information on real threats of major security dangers, the reward will be 50,000 yuan or more; for providing the following kinds of information on threats to social and political security, the reward will range from 5,000 yuan to 50,000 yuan according to the value of the information provided:

1. Report clues about actions aiming to split the country; using explosives, spreading poison, committing arson, kidnapping, or murder; manufacturing, trading, transporting or privately storing guns and ammunition; and gathering intelligence or providing funding to reactionary foreign or domestic groups.
2. Report clues about actions which utilize illegal religious teaching places to organize and carry out skills training for guns, ammunition and manufacturing of explosives; or to conduct technical or physical training for violent terrorist crimes; or actions to instill a separatist ideology in others, agitate for violence, or incite ethnic hatred.
3. Report clues about actions that use "Haram" [forbidden by Islam] as an excuse to attack the Party and the government; refusal to use the renminbi currency or inciting others to do so, rejecting the use of or destroying documents issued by the government; refusal to apply for a marriage license; to subvert implementation of

the Marriage Law by means of “reading Nikah [Nikah is the Islamic marriage ceremony]” or “Talak [Talak is the Islamic process of divorce];” and other actions that openly defy national laws and policies.

4. Report clues about actions to use the internet to produce, extract, reproduce, post, or publish audio, video, pictures, or text which includes content that incites national separatism, ethnic hatred or discrimination, and furthermore about the actions of their dissemination; and to report clues about actions to illegally publish, print, reproduce, sell or disseminate books or audio recordings that contain separatist content.
5. Report clues about using religious courts in order to implement forcible dispute resolution or to take actions that damage the country’s judiciary.
6. Report clues about actions to organize, assemble, compel or instigate multiple people to participate in illegal religious activities; or disturb social order.
7. Report clues about actions to coerce, instigate or connive to have those who should accept national compulsory education to interfere with the normal educational order through studying religious scripture, fasting [for Ramadan], or worshipping.
8. Report clues about actions to compete for religious spaces [Mihrap, a special space in the Mosque, where the Imam stands, leads prayer and gives sermons] for religious groups, and leadership authority, or to occupy the altar by force; to report clues about actions that create conflicts between religions or sects or provoke religious or sectarian strife.
9. Report clues about actions to attempt to organize or assemble religious converts to cause disturbances, to interfere with the government to carry out its normal religious affairs management role, or to attempt to gather a crowd to surround, attack, occupy by force or loot public places and religious sites.
10. Report clues about actions to preach illegally; to restrict the personal freedom of others; corporal punishment; and physical abuse of others; and clues about cadres, workers, students, Party members or the rural “three old personnel” [cadres, party members and specially recognized senior citizens in rural areas who meet service requirements] who commit illegal religious activities such as believing in religion, entering a mosque, expanding religious buildings without authorization, or receiving religious teaching fees.
11. Report clues about the first signs of intelligence relating to premeditated plans for major disturbances organized within the county area which could seriously impact social and political stability such as unrest, riots, illegal marches, rallies, petitions, registering complaints with the government, strikes or student walkouts.
12. Report clues that could play a direct role in capturing important wanted criminals at large that threaten national security or political stability,
13. Clues that play a direct role in preventing or quelling events that may cause major mass disturbance.
14. Clues that play an important role in preventing mass defection or migration.
15. Clues that play a direct role in eliminating illegal religious activities such as underground preaching and illegal “tabliq” [tabliq is an informal religious discussion led by a layperson].

16. Clues that play a direct role in cracking [legal] cases to incite propaganda that damages national security through major slogans, pamphlets, leaflets, letters, reactionary propaganda materials and jihadi propaganda videos.
17. Other clues which play a major role in achieving protection of national security and political stability of the entire county.

II. For reporting, exposing and providing information on actions that disturb public order; impair public safety; or infringe on people's rights or property rights; or actions that disrupt social management such as theft, robbery, rape, injury, fraud, drug crimes, or traffic accidents, within the provisions of other illegal criminal activities in the Criminal Law and Security Punishment Law, rewards range from 500-5,000 yuan.

III. For reporting the following other kinds of information, rewards range from 50-500 yuan.

1. Discovering a religious site violates [all] 23 Clauses. [23 rules restricting the religious freedom of the Uyghur people];
2. Discovering illegal preaching;
3. Discovering a person studies scripture outside of their local area;
4. Discovering prayer in public places;
5. Discovering a Party member, cadre or minor enter a mosque;
6. Discovering people with bizarre dress or growing a long beard;
7. Discovering frequent meetings of released convicts and others;
8. Discovering reactionary slogans printed on currency;
9. Discovering people distorting the facts of the July 5 incident, saying things that do not benefit ethnic unity, and hurt the party and the nation's image;
10. Discovering someone's speech is reactionary, and actions are abnormal;
11. Discovering a dispute between Han and ethnic residents;
12. Discovering someone watching a reactionary DVD, or downloaded reactionary videos on mobile phones or computers;
13. Discovering possession of air guns or hunting guns;
14. Discovering privately making and selling of matches, natural gas cylinders, controlled knives, fireworks, gasoline, plumbing materials (pipes, plugs), etc.; sales without records and without conducting real name registration.
15. Discovering illegal printing and circulation of reactionary propaganda materials;
16. Discovering reactionary slogans posted on the walls of public places;
17. Discovering growing of marijuana, or using marijuana, ecstasy, heroin or other drugs.
18. Discovering a book or video store that sells illegal propaganda materials.
19. Discovering the first signs of a public brawl;
20. Discovering someone who attempts to bypass ranks with a petition, or bypass ranks with a collective petition;
21. Discovering someone encouraging others to bypass ranks with a petition, causing disturbance or harassment through a petition.
22. Discovering another's home is used to store dangerous materials such as large amounts of gasoline, ammonia, or glass infusion bottles;
23. Discovering an early marriage in violation of the Marriage Law;
24. Discovering an excess birth in violation of the Family Planning Law;

25. Discovering impersonation of a government official or using other means of fraud;
26. Discovering engagement in feudal superstitions;
27. Promptly report all kind of traffic accidents, and provide clues;
28. Discovering someone privately rents an apartment [or house] without obtaining police authorization;
29. Discovering that crowds are gambling;
30. Discovering a local person [or officer] is missing;
31. Promptly discovering a migrant person has not registered with the community, village or police station;
32. Discovering that a minor drops out of school;
33. Discovering that a minor enters an Internet café and gambles in a game room;
34. Promptly discovering a foreigner has entered the county;
35. Discovering security risks in public facilities and entertainment venues;
36. Other information related to stability.

#### IV. Methods and channels to report information gathering

Upon discovering any of the aforementioned clues, first it can be reported to the village's (or town's) or agricultural farmland's [agricultural farmlands are controlled by the paramilitary Xinjiang Construction and Production Corps] political secretary or police station; second it can be directly reported by calling "110;" third it can be reported to the county public security bureau; fourth it can be reported to the community (or village) party secretary; fifth it can be reported to the County Politics and Law Committee (telephone: 8322230). People can report by directly going to those units to make a report, or it can also be done by phone or by a letter reporting to those units.

Anyone reporting an offense, making a disclosure or providing intelligence clues can leave their contact information, and once the clues are effectively investigated to verify their truth, the relevant department will contact the informant; and give a reward according to the "Shayar County Intelligence Information [Gathering] Award Announcement." Informants who do not wish to leave their contact information can leave a bank account number, and if the clues provided are effectively investigated to verify their truth, based on the reward standard in the "Shayar County Intelligence Information [Gathering] Award Announcement," the relevant department will be responsible for depositing the reward in the bank account provided by the informant.

#### V. Security Commitment for Informants

The County Politics and Law Committee, the County Public Security Bureau, each township's (or town's), agricultural farmland's police department, each township's (or town's), agricultural farmland's Political and Legal Secretary, and each community's (or village's) party branch secretary will work to protect the confidentiality of informants, and the public security bureau organs will guarantee the personal safety of informants.

*Image: A screenshot of the online notice is on the following page.*

# 塔河明珠-沙雅

绿色沙雅 生态沙雅

首页 | 走进沙雅 | 新闻动态 | 政务公开 | 网上办事 | 公众参与 | 生态经济 | 产业发展 | 旅游休闲 | 应急管理

当前位置: 首页>>新闻动态>>公示公告>>正文

## 沙雅县情报信息奖励公告

2014-04-16 17:34 点击: 109

社会稳定信息工作是做好稳定工作的第一要素,及时上报社会稳定信息可以积极预防、准确打击各种违法犯罪,有效保护国家和人民群众生命财产安全。为鼓励广大人民群众积极提供各类线索,现将我县情报信息奖励办法公告如下:

凡是提供社会稳定信息一经核实查证属实的,根据信息种类和等级,按照标准分别给予50元—5万元不等的奖励。具体分为:

一、提供重大危害有现实危害的信息,予以5万元以上的重奖;提供以下危害社会政治安定类信息的,根据提供信息价值,奖励5000元—5万元:

- 1、举报以分裂国家为目的,实施爆炸、投毒、放火、绑架、杀人,或制造、买卖、运输、私藏枪支弹药,或为境内外反动组织刺探情报、提供资助等行为的线索。
- 2、举报利用非法教经点,组织、实施传授枪支弹药爆炸物品制造技术,或进行暴力恐怖犯罪技能和体能训练的行为;向他人灌输分裂思想,鼓吹暴力,煽动民族仇恨的行为线索。
- 3、举报以“阿拉木”为借口,攻击党和政府,实施或煽动他人拒绝使用人民币,拒绝领用、销毁政府颁发的证件,拒绝办理婚姻登记,以“念尼卡”或“塔拉克”等方式破坏婚姻法的实施,以及其它公然对抗国家法律、政策的行为线索。
- 4、举报利用互联网制作、摘抄、复制、粘贴、登载带有煽动分裂国家、民族仇恨、歧视内容的音频、视频、图片、文字,并予以传播行为的线索;举报非法出版、印刷、复制、销售和传播带有分裂国家内容的书刊、音像制品的行为线索。
- 5、举报以宗教法庭等形式,实施强行裁判纠纷,妨害国家司法的行为线索。
- 6、举报组织、纠集、强迫或者唆使多人参加非法宗教活动,干扰社会秩序的行为线索。
- 7、举报强迫、唆使、纵容应当接受国家义务教育的人员学经、封斋、礼拜,干扰正常教学秩序的行为线索。
- 8、举报争夺宗教场所和宗教团体领导权,强占讲经坛的行为线索;举报制造宗教、教派之间矛盾,挑起宗教、教派纷争的行为线索。
- 9、举报企图组织、纠集教民制造事端,干扰政府行使正常宗教事务管理职能,或企图聚众围攻、冲击、强占、哄抢公共场所以及宗教场所的行为线索。
- 10、举报非法讲经,限制他人人身自由、体罚和虐待他人身体的行为线索;干部、职工、学生、党员、农村“三老人员”信教、进清真寺、私自改建宗教场所、收取宗教课税等非法宗教活动的行为线索。
- 11、举报涉及县城范围内有组织、有预谋的策划动乱、骚乱、非法游行、集会、请愿、上访、罢工、罢课等严重影响社会政治稳定的重大闹事苗头情报线索。
- 12、举报对破获危害国家安全、政治稳定的重大通缉在逃犯罪分子起到直接作用的线索。
- 13、对防止或平息重大群体性闹事事件起到直接作用的线索;
- 14、对防止集体叛逃、迁徙起到重要作用的线索。
- 15、对取缔地下讲经点、非法“太比力克”等非法宗教活动起到直接作用的线索。
- 16、发现公共场所墙壁上张贴反动标语的;
- 17、发现种植麻烟、吸食麻烟、摇头丸、海洛因等毒品的;
- 18、发现书店、音像店出售非法宣传品的;
- 19、发现有聚众斗殴苗头的;
- 20、发现有人越级上访、集体越级上访的;
- 21、发现有人教唆他人越级上访、闹访、缠访的;
- 22、发现他人家中存放大量汽油、硝酸、玻璃输液瓶等危险物品的;
- 23、发现违反婚姻法早婚的;
- 24、发现违反计划生育法超生的;
- 25、发现假冒国家公职人员或利用其他方式进行行骗的;
- 26、发现搞封建迷信的;
- 27、及时报告各类交通事故,并提供线索的;
- 28、发现有人未经派出所允许,私自出租房屋的;
- 29、发现聚众赌博的;
- 30、发现本地人员失踪的;
- 31、及时发现未在社区、村、派出所登记的流动人员的;
- 32、发现未成年人辍学的;
- 33、发现未成年人进入网吧和在游戏厅赌博的;
- 34、及时发现进入我县的外国人的;
- 35、发现公共设施、娱乐场所存在安全隐患的;
- 36、其他涉稳信息。

四、情报信息上报途径及方式:

发现以上各类线索的,一是可向所在乡(镇)场政法书记、派出所汇报;二是可直接拨打“110”进行汇报;三是可向县公安局汇报;四是可向社区(村)党支部书记汇报;五是可向县委政法委汇报(电话:8322230)。汇报人本人可直接到以上单位汇报,也可打电话或利用信件向以上单位汇报。

凡检举、揭发或提供情报线索的群众,可留下联系方式,线索一旦查证真实有效的,相关部门将与举报人联系,根据《沙雅县情报信息奖励公告》给予奖励。举报人不愿意留下联系方式的,可留下银行账户,提供的线索经查证真实有效的,根据《沙雅县情报信息奖励公告》的奖励标准,相关部门负责将奖金打入举报人提供的银行账户。

五、举报人安全保障

县委政法委、县公安局、各乡(镇)场派出所、各乡(镇)场政法书记、各社区(村)党支部书记将会为举报人做好保密工作,公安机关将保障举报人的人身安全。

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The Uyghur American Association (UAA) works to promote the preservation and flourishing of a rich, humanistic and diverse Uyghur culture, and to support the right of the Uyghur people to use peaceful, democratic means to determine their own political future in East Turkestan.



The UAA launched the UHRP in 2004 to promote improved human rights conditions for Uyghurs and other indigenous groups in East Turkestan, on the premise that the assurance of basic human rights will facilitate the realization of the community's democratic aspirations.

UHRP also works to raise the profile of the Uyghur people and the plight of all “minority” peoples in East Turkestan by:

Researching, writing and publishing news stories and longer reports covering a broad range human rights issues involving civil and political rights, through to social cultural and economic rights;

Preparing briefings – either written or in person – for journalists, academics, diplomats and politicians on the human rights situation faced by the Uyghur people and others in East Turkestan.

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