



Eastern Turkistan Information Center

Uygurischer Verein e. V
Vereinsregister VR 15617

2009-03-08

Kaiser-Wilhelmstr. 247
47169 Duisburg
Germany

Tel:0049 203 579 36 45
Internet: www.uygur.org
karakash_a@hotmail.com

The Design of Poverty in a Resource-Rich, Occupied Land

Chinese government policies in East Turkistan claim to uplift Uyghurs from poverty, but statistical analyses of the economy of East Turkistan reveal an intentional design of poverty by the colonial rule in this oil-rich region. The huge income gap between Han Chinese migrants and Uyghurs and harsh economic discrimination against the Uyghurs facilitate gradual ethnic cleansing, deprive the development of Uyghurs, and put Uyghurs into poverty despite the rich natural resources such as oil, gas and abundant economic opportunities in this vast land.

Exploitation of natural resources, rural income and poverty

The Xinjiang Academy of Social Science issued the blue book titled "2008-2009 Year Xinjiang Economic Society Situation Analysis and Forecast" in December 23, 2008. The blue book

presented railroad construction as the most significant improvement, a success of the economy of East Turkistan since it was the main apparatus of the Han Chinese migration into East Turkistan and the export of natural resources into Han Chinese provinces. The blue book also mentioned the enormous exploitation of oil, natural gas, coal, gold, cotton, meat and other natural and agricultural resources that were transferred to inland Chinese provinces as an economical success in so-called “Xinjiang”. According to the blue book, beef prices rose rapidly in East Turkistan in 2008 and reached 30 Yuan for a kg. The primary factor of the rise of food prices in East Turkistan and the rise of the CPI was caused by unbalanced product supply and demand because the produce of East Turkistan was transferred to Inland China to feed Chinese cities.

Oil and gas are abundant in East Trukistan. Reserves are estimated at 20.9 billion tons of oil and 10.8 trillion cubic meters of gas. Proven reserves of oil and gas reach 3.9 billion tons and 1.4 trillion cubic meters, according to Chinese media.¹ East Turkistan became China's second largest oil production and first largest natural gas production base in 2008². China's oil production output in East Turkistan reached 27.4 million tons in 2008, an increase of 1 million tons from 2007³

Despite these achievements and the rich natural resources, rural annual net income per household was only 2,737 Yuan in 2006, 850 Yuan below the average household income level of China⁴. It increased by 11.6% in 2007 and reached 3,150 Yuan⁵. However, this statistic was boosted by the data of the Chinese Military Construction Corps, who are not suffering with poverty. In reality, the annual net income of per household of 30 Uyghur villages that were considered poor by the Chinese government was 980 Yuan in 2000 and increased to 2206 Yuan in 2007, but is still 944 Yuan below than the per household average rural net income in East Turkistan⁶. The net rural income per household of Uyghurs suffering with poverty equals only \$306 US-dollar per annum

¹“Xinjiang becomes China's second largest oil producer”

Tianshannet, Updated: 2009-January-7 10:18:05

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-01/07/content_3776362.htm

²“新疆探明天然气地质储量 1.4 万亿方 居中国第一” tianshan news net, February 5th, 2009

http://www.tianshannet.com.cn/news/content/2009-02/05/content_3823540.htm

³ ibd.,

⁴ “深入贯彻落实科学发展观实现新疆经济又好又快发展对贯彻落实国发 32 号文的几点认识与思考” 李红, Xinjiang Kunlun net,

June 23, 2008,

<http://www.brjdj.gov.cn/zzly/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1888>

⁵ “2008 年新疆自治区政府工作报告” Nur Bekri, February 18, 2008

http://www.gov.cn/test/2008-02/18/content_892032.htm

or 86 US-cents a day, which is below the limit of the dollar-a-day is considered to be an international benchmark for extreme poverty. However, this figure does not include no-income families who are living in hunger and low-income families whose annual income is lower than 700 Yuan. Because the Chinese government strictly controls the information, it is difficult to know exactly how many Uyghur farmer families are suffering with hunger. According to the Chinese media, 1.3 million no-income farmer families in poverty region have received maximum 700 Yuan annual social assistance in 2008.⁷ Based on the statistical figure of only one prefecture of East Turkistan in 2007, approximately 56,240 people's annual income was lower than 700 Yuan⁸. (The Kizilsu Kirgiz prefecture is located in the far south of East Turkistan and is populated with Uyghurs and Tajiks.)

Rural areas suffering extreme poverty in East Turkistan are located mainly in the south, the total land is 460,110 square km and Uyghurs make up 93.75% of the total population, 77% of them were farmers. This figure indicates that people living in poverty in East Turkistan are mainly Uyghurs.

However, the average per household annual net income of the Chinese PLA construction corps farm is 6,000 Yuan⁹ and thus three times higher than an Uyghur farmers income. In urban areas that are heavily populated with Han Chinese settlers in East Turkistan, the annual average income was 10,120 Yuan in 2007 and increased to 11,400 Yuan in 2008¹⁰, being five times higher than an Uyghur farmers income. As Uyghurs mainly live in rural areas, the disparity between urban and rural incomes indicates a very high ethnically defined inequality between Uyghurs and Han Chinese. This is also the consequence of the largely urban focused policy of the Chinese government and it was designed to put Uyghurs into poverty to facilitate the elimination of Uyghurs from their own land.

Why poverty?

⁶ 新疆各族人民的生产生活水平持续改善、稳步提高, tianshan news net, december 12, 2008

<http://www.xj.chinanews.com.cn/newsshow.asp?id=62932&ntitle=57e6e4da520d6917bcde9696eb7769bd>

⁷ “新疆：近130万农牧民享受到农村最低生活保障” Tianshan news net, March 4, 2009, http://www.tianshannet.com/news/content/2009-03/04/content_3877452.htm

⁸ “克州农村低保改革工作取得可喜进展” Xinjiang news net, published: October 7, 2008

<http://www.xj.cei.gov.cn/tizhigaige/xinjiang/2008-10-07/27230.html>

⁹ “2008年新疆自治区政府工作报告” speech of Nur Bekri, February 18, 2008

http://www.gov.cn/test/2008-02/18/content_892032.htm

¹⁰ *Ibid.*,

Abundant in natural resources and wealth, East Turkistan is attracting millions of Han Chinese settlers today, but why is there is no chance for Uyghurs to benefit from this wealth and why is there is no chance for them to get out of their condition of poverty?

The Chinese government constantly claims its role in uplifting the poverty from Uyghurs, a claim supposedly proven by various investments in East Turkistan by the so-called “Ending the Poverty of Minorities (Uyghurs)” policy of China, but in reality, those investments only focus on urban township construction for the benefit of Han Chinese migrants, railroad constructions to facilitate the transport of natural resources from East Turkistan to Chinese cities and pouring Han migrants to East Turkistan, or spending to intensify cultural assimilation and dispossess Uyghurs from their own land to accelerate the ethnic cleansing policy.

No investment for non-farming activities but investment on forced labor transfer and government infrastructure

Most of China’s investments were taken up by railroad construction, airline and highway constructions. No chance is given to Uyghur farmers to develop non-farming activities. For instance, according to a report in Tianshan News Net titled “Government Investment on Farming in Xinjiang reach 22.3 billion Yuan in 2008”, total government spending on farming is 22.3 billion Yuan and most of it was used on housing construction for Han settlers and for earthquake regions, agricultural water solutions and given as loans to the farm sector. Only 120 million Yuan of this amount were spent in the poor region in the south of East Turkistan mostly populated with Uyghurs. Although 120 million Yuan was spent in the poor region and propandized to be focused only on non-farming activities of rural households such as farm markets and labor training¹¹. In reality, the trained labor was mainly for young Uyghur women and they were transferred to Inland China as cheap labor or slave labor, with no chance given for them to create or participate in non-farming activities such as rural industrial diversification. For instance, Chinese government media also reported that transferred labor force from East Turkistan to inland China was 1,440,000 people in 2007 alone and 80% of them were young Uyghur women from Uyghur villages¹². The Chinese government uses the term “men times” to explain that those Uyghur women were coming back and go again after they finished their job contract. This indicates that none of them were returned permanently and stayed in their own village to develop township and village enterprises or private enterprises. In reality most of them were unable to return, for example the girls send from the Peyzivat village were 6,052 and none of them were able to return¹³. According to ETIC video interviews, those girls were used as slave labor and did not get any payment and were locked behind factory doors and were not

¹¹ “2008年新疆各级财政“三农”投入达223亿元” Tianshan net, January 27, 2009
http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2009-01/27/content_10725550.htm

¹² “政协委员为新疆农牧区女性劳动力转移工作支招” Tianshan news net, January 10, 2009

http://www.tianshannet.com/news/content/2009-01/10/content_3783101.htm

¹³ “经济危机蔓延 伽师县六千人员七省务工 无人被裁” Tianshan news net, February 5th, 2009

allowed to go back their homeland, because their wages were directly paid to government officials and recruiters by the factory owners.



At the photo above, Uyghur women transferred to Qingdao city, demonstrated raising slogans of “We Want Go Home”

Construction activity is mainly focused on either urban and township expansion that can benefit the settlement of new Han migrants or large-scale high profile infrastructure constructions. For example, in 2009, China’s total investment on railroad construction in East Turkistan was 120 billion Yuan¹⁴, it accounted 20% of China’s total rail road investment in whole China. Investment on highway construction in 2009 is 7.1 billion Yuan¹⁵ and last year’s investment on expressway construction was 15.3 billion Yuan.¹⁶ The Chinese government has planned to invest

http://gongjijia.cn/news/content/2009-02/05/content_3824564.htm accessed February 9, 2009

¹⁴ “Xinjiang to invest in rural highways,” China view news, November 25, 2008

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-11/25/content_10410141.htm

¹⁵ “7.1 Bln Yuan In Expressway Network” Tianshan news net, February 4, 2009,

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-02/04/content_3821168.htm

¹⁶ “2008 年新疆公路交通固定资产投资达 153 亿元” Tianshan news net, updated january19, 2009, accessed January 28, 2009, http://www.tianshannet.com.cn/news/content/2009-01/19/content_3798670.htm

another 120 billion Yuan to build more than 50,000 km of highways in the coming five years¹⁷ to facilitate Han migration.



Photo: Rail road construction in Xinjiang

However, hospital infrastructure and construction of schools and social welfare have been largely ignored. The ETIC learned that almost all of the villages populated with Uyghurs were not given any funds for hospital infrastructure. Public health first aid stations, ambulance equipments, beds and life support machines are extremely insufficient. Each year, many Uyghur patients lose their lives because of improper health care due to having no access to emergency aid in those villages. It is difficult for Uyghur's to access hospitals in the capital city of Urumchi because of the long distance as well as the financial costs. Low earthquake resistance elementary and middle school buildings that lay in a dangerous line in East Turkistan were extant over 663 thousand square meters according to Chinese statistics in 2008¹⁸. Although the Chinese government declared to reconstruct all dangerous school buildings, it has asked the county and village governments to collect almost half of the funding necessary for these school constructions¹⁹. This indicates that the burden will again be put on Uyghur farmers in the villages.

¹⁷

“Xinjiang to invest in rural highways” Transport weekly, January 29, 2009

<http://www.transportweekly.com/pages/en/news/articles/57771/>

¹⁸“新疆今年将彻底消除中小学校舍危房” Xinjiang news net, January 4, 2009

<http://www.xjbs.com.cn/cgi-bin/GInfo.dll?DispInfo&w=xjbs&nid=592055>

¹⁹ Ibid.,

Discrimination and Compulsory Crop Plan

Although Chinese law indicates that any entity causing loss to farmers through the forced adoption of technology is required to repay the total damage, the law was never applied to Uyghur farmers, and Uyghur farmers still suffer under the failed compulsory crop plan. For instance, in Yengi Sar county which has 12 villages and 240,000 Uyghur farmers, all farmers were forced to get a loan and to produce only long beans, resulting in heavy financial losses for the farmers because of over supply. But in 2008, the plan was forcibly repeated again with similar results despite the previous heavy loss, and farmers could not pay the loan and their equipment became out of use.²⁰ Uyghur farmer Hakim Siyit from the Yengi Sar county went to Beijing last September to lobby on behalf of his fellow farmers to demand compensation for the failed crop plan. But he was forcibly returned by the authorities and pressured to be quiet²¹.



Photo: RFA Uyghur farmer Hakim Siyit

Chinese media reported that the Chinese government gave 70.22 million Yuan of subsidy for 6.68134 million mu (Chinese acres) of wheat and rice last year in East Turkistan to improve the strains²². The ETIC learned that there was no wheat and rice subsidy given to the Uyghur

²⁰ Uyghur farmers video, presented by Uyghur farmers,

<http://uyghuramerican.org/docs/dehqan.html>

²¹ “Uyghur Farmers Appeal, To No Avail”, RFA, Uyghur service, January 30, 2009.

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/longbean-farmer-01302009234055.html>

²² “Subsidy To Improved Strains” Tianshan news net, update: febraury 4, 2009.

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-02/04/content_3821117.htm

farmers. In many Uyghur villages in the south of East Turkistan, Uyghur farmers were not given the choice to produce wheat or rice under the Chinese government protection plan for Han Chinese farmers' agricultural production. But in the north of East Turkistan, Uyghur farmers were given the choice to produce wheat or rice because, most of the Han farmers resided in north of East Turkistan, and Uyghur farmers and Han migrant farmers were not very distantly or separately located in the north.

Following the large scale of Han migration, the grain producing acreage of East Turkistan was largely destroyed or reduced to crops like cotton under the governments compulsory production plan in the north. For instance, according to Chinese statistics, one third of grain producing land loss was created in the Hoten region in 30 years. Hoten is the largest agricultural region of East Turkistan, and heavily populated with Uyghurs. In 1970s there was no Han Chinese population.

According to Hotan regional statistics in 2009, Hoten's grain producing land was 3,320,000 mu (Chinese acres) in 1978, and as a result of the yearly gradual decrease of grain producing land, in 2008 grain producing land diminished to 2,240,000 Chinese acres²³.

One of the undeniable losses of grain producing land was caused by arbitrary exploitation of natural resources and Han settlers' housing construction. There are also other reasons like desertification, compulsory agricultural plans that force Uyghur farmers to reduce their grain producing land to cotton or other producing land. Despite the loss of grain producing land, grain production was increased as China forced Uyghurs to produce genetically modified crops and forced them to use synthetic fertilizer that required higher operating costs. As a consequence, farmers were forced to take high interest loans for operating costs. However farmers not only ended up with heavy debt which they were unable to pay, but also with hunger and loss of their homes. Because, each Uyghur farmers produced total grains are taken over by the Chinese government and calculated as some portion of the heavy taxes, it increases the total amounts of grains in government inventories but nothing is left for Uyghur farmers.

In 2009, the Hoten Region Communist Party Committee announced to reduce grain producing land again and increase production through new technology. However, in Chinese construction corps agricultural land, for Han farmers, the Chinese government planned to reduce cotton producing land from 7,800,000 Chinese acres to 6,500,000 Chinese acres and increase grain producing land from 3,500,000 Chinese acres to 4,500,000 Chinese acres²⁴. This indicates the Chinese government's double standard policy on Uyghur farmers and Chinese farmers or the Chinese construction corps, as the Chinese farmers and Chinese construction corps could get a special advantage by producing more grains and benefit from the increasing grain price while Uyghurs are not allowed to produce grains as they want.

²³ “改革开放 30 年来和田地区粮食生产情况” Hoten regional statistics, January 21, 2009

<http://www.xjht.gov.cn/read.asp?intId=28458>

²⁴ “新疆兵团计划 3 年内将棉花面积压缩至 650 万亩” Xinhua news net, December 26, 2008

<http://www.yonglian.gov.cn/ArticleContent.asp?id=11657>



Photo: Han Chinese Farmer in Xinjiang

Heavy Taxation

The so-called Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Tax Bureau announced recently that the Autonomous Region People's government has decided to raise the land tax and has already collected a high amount of land tax. ETIC learned that land tax was raised two times in all regions of East Turkistan.

On average, the land tax for each mu (a Chinese acre) of agricultural land is 80 Yuan. If we calculate at this rate, the farmers would be forced to pay 800 Yuan for 10 mu of land and that would be higher than the average annual income of people in most of the poverty stricken areas. As a consequence, Uyghur farmers with low income are unable to bear this heavy land tax and are forced to abandon their land. But the Chinese government is quite happy with the new tax regulation because it facilitates on a large scale the Han Chinese immigrant's residential problems: millions of Han Chinese immigrants are then able to take over those abandoned lands. In turn the Uyghurs become landless.



Uyghur farmers were forced to take out high interest rate loans after being threatened by government officials and were put into heavy debt – which may result in their being forced to abandon their houses. One Uyghur farmer²⁵ explained: “ I didn’t want to take out a loan, because I knew that I wouldn’t be able to pay it back. But if I didn’t take a loan I would have been labelled as a separatist and jailed, so, being scared, I borrowed 2,000 Yuan from the bank and bought seeds. Those seeds were offered to me at a very high price but I was forced to buy and so had no alternative. In the end I couldn’t pay back and as I was afraid of government officials I couldn’t return to my home, so I escaped and I am now sleeping on the streets.”

The total loan received by farmers from credit associations in 2008 was 30 billion 160 million Yuan in East Turkistan. Compared to 2007, this represented an increase of 36%²⁶. However, the loan given to the Uyghur farmers was only to cover agricultural operational costs, not to develop non-farming activities. The Uyghur farmers from several different villages who accepted to be interviewed by the ETIC disclosed that it is almost impossible for Uyghur farmers to get loans for non-farming activity and that the interest rate is very high, unlike the loans granted to Chinese farmers. “Chinese farmers can easily get a loan for non-farming activities, but not us”, said all those interviewed. The loan given to the farmers in East Turkistan for agricultural needs such as the purchase of seeds and chemical fertilizers amounted to 4 billion Yuan in 2009²⁷. But no mention has been made of how poor Uyghur farmers were forced into debt by this high interest rate loan and how they were forced to buy high priced agricultural operational equipment designed by the government while Chinese farmers and soldiers benefitted from interest relief or full interest subsidies when they applied for a loan between 20,000 Yuan and 50,000 Yuan for the purpose of opening a small business²⁸.

Roots of Unemployment which have been left unexplained by China

²⁵ Uyghur farmers video, presented by Uyghur farmers,

<http://uyghuramerican.org/docs/dehqan.html>

²⁶ “新疆农信社各项存款突破 500 亿元” tianshan news net, january5th, 2009.
http://www.tianshannet.com/news/content/2009-01/05/content_3772197.htm

²⁷ 新疆农信社 2009 年度贷款 80%投向“三农” Tianshan news net, february 15, 2009

http://www.tianshannet.com.cn/news/content/2009-02/15/content_3841788.htm

²⁸“New Policy On Petty-Sum Loan” Tianshan news net, february12, 2009

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-02/12/content_3836828.htm

China used to claim language barrier, population growth and maternity as the main sources of unemployment and poverty among Uyghurs. These issues have been used to justify its cultural genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Uyghurs and largely ignored the roots of the devastated economic situation of Uyghurs.

Why are there still no jobs for fluent Han Chinese speaking university graduate Uyghurs?

Fluency in the Chinese language is the Chinese government explanation for the high rate of unemployment among Uyghurs. However, it is used in fact as an excuse for China to eliminate the Uyghur language and intensify the assimilation of Uyghurs since so-called bilingual education is in reality only monolingual Chinese education and there has been no improvement in Chinese speaking Uyghurs' unemployment rate.

The Chinese Central Government put 3.9 billion Yuan into the so-called Bilingual Education Project between 1995 and 2000, and estimated that it could exceed 10 billion Yuan if the supporting capital contributed by local authorities were counted with it²⁹. This year the Chinese government intends to invest 3.3 billion Yuan on monolingual Chinese education in preschool facilities: 2.1 billion Yuan of this amount will be used to build preschool monolingual Chinese language kindergartens. They estimate that the coverage rate of preschool bilingual education will be 80% in 2012³⁰. This means 80% of Uyghur children will have Chinese as their first language in 2012. Even now most Uyghurs are fluent in Chinese and although Uyghur university students and college graduates are all fluent in Chinese language, they still suffer from unemployment and face being refused business licenses in most cases. The high unemployment rate has become a most serious issue among Uyghurs in East Turkistan today.

²⁹“ IV. Promoting the Common Development of All Ethnic Groups” Chinese government white paper, may 20, 2004,

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/4/4.4.htm>

³⁰ “Big Support For Children's Bilingual Edu” Tianshannet, Updated: 2009-January-15 10:52:45

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-01/15/content_3792163.htm



Photo: most of the Uyghur students speak Chinese as a first language

According to Xinjiang and Chinese statistics between 2001 and 2005, the labour force actually in work is far lower than the average labour force in work in China. In 2000, China's labour force in work was 77.3% and East Turkistan's labour force in work was 55.99%. In 2004, East Turkistan and China's labour force in work was 53.71% and 75.75% respectively. This figure indicates that the unemployment rate of East Turkistan is lower than China's national average unemployment rate. Although Chinese researchers recognizing the fact that the high unemployment rate among Uyghurs has boosted the low labour participating rate in East Turkistan, they see the issue in a different stand and try to explain that the language barrier and the policy of giving advantage to non-Han nations in East Turkistan to have two children increases the maternity of women and house wives, thus preventing them from participating in the job market.³¹ However, they neglect the thousands of fluent Chinese speaking graduate unmarried Uyghur students who are jobless in the streets and huge investments in monolingual daycare programs that have not created any opportunities for jobless Uyghur mothers.

Since most of the urban enterprises are Chinese or most of the enterprises are controlled by the state, they prefer Chinese laborers often, and some of the enterprises even reject Uyghur job seekers totally and put a sign on their door such as "we are not hiring Uyghurs" or "Uyghurs are not excepted." Most of the Uyghurs have no access even for menial jobs or physical jobs while Chinese are employed for all tasks. The Chinese government migrates millions of Han Chinese workers every year for government projects such as oil and mine projects or railway constructions, highway constructions and housing constructions. Even private Chinese business owners and wealthy Chinese farmers are bringing thousands of Han Chinese workers from Inland China instead of hiring Uyghurs. For example, the immigrant Han Chinese workers from

³¹ "新疆劳动参与率偏低的原因分析", 熊永丽, Chinese article downloading centre, February 8, 2009

inland China for cotton picking exceeded 600,000 people in 2008.³² There is no reason why these plentiful job opportunities that attract 30,000 Han Chinese migrants per day were not available for the Uyghur job seekers³³



Photo: Han Chinese workers at the train station

Reducing the Uyghur population cannot solve poverty

The increasing population of Uyghurs is another Chinese explanation of poverty in Uyghurs.

The Uyghur population's birth rate is still lower than the Chinese population's birth rate despite the fact that China allowed Uyghurs to have two or three children. It is significant to analyze and compare the Uyghur population growth rate and Han Chinese population growth rate in East Turkistan, and not in all of China, because Uyghurs only live in East Turkistan and they are not accepted as residents anywhere else in China except for a few Uyghur government officials.

For instance, in accordance with Chinese census, non-Han nations in East Turkistan constituted 4.54 million³⁴ including 300,000 Kazaks and other insignificant numbers of minority nations in

³² “兵团60余万拾花工成内需主力 预计消费棉花超过400万公斤” Tianshan news net, November 12, 2008.

http://www.tianshannet.com.cn/news/content/2008-11/12/content_3424471.htm

³³ “Urumqi Meet Peak Of Migrant Workers” Tianshan news net, February 20, 2009

http://www.aboutxinjiang.com/news/content/2009-02/20/content_3852939.htm

³⁴“ IV. Promoting the Common Development of All Ethnic Groups” Chinese government wite paper,

1953 in East Turkistan. Current Uyghur population is 9 million and the population increase is lower than Han Chinese and Kazaks.

Chinese statistics from 2005 show the non-Han population was 10,960,490 in East Turkistan (includes 1,250,000 Kazak people and other minority nations). This indicates that non-Han nations in east Turkistan increased slightly more than 2 times compared to the 1950's. The Han Chinese population was 300,000 (6% of the total population) in 1949, it increased to 7,800,000 in 2005 according to 2005 Chinese statistics published by Xinjiang officials and this indicates that the Han Chinese population increased 26 times compared to 1949 due the huge numbers resulting from the Han migration policy of China.

In fact, Uyghurs are mainly in rural areas and depend on agricultural work, and a bigger family size would produce more labour force to increase the productivity of agricultural and industrial development in East Turkistan, but millions of Han Chinese migration and the governments special advantage policy for Han migrants completely eliminated Uyghur labor from economic production process.

However, the Chinese government claimed that the increase of the Uyghur population is the main source of poverty and rapidly increased fiscal budget on birth control measurement in East Turkistan to reduce the Uyghur population. For instance, in 2008, Beijing's direct investment on birth control was 140 million Yuan and the so-called Xinjiang Autonomous Governments investment on birth control policy was 230 million Yuan. A total of 381 million Yuan were invested and spend on assisting families which agreed to having one child only and punishing families that do not cooperate with government policy³⁵. Although the Chinese government law allowed Uyghurs to have two children, the social welfare policy for a single child family attracted millions of needy Uyghur families to cooperate with the single child policy. As a result, the number of families which have obtained a "single child award" and "birth control award" in rural areas reached 1,240,000 families by the end of 2008 and increased by more than 150 thousand families in 2008 only.³⁶

may 20, 2004, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/4/4.4.htm>

³⁵ “我区去年人口自然增长率控制在 11.7‰以内” Xinjiang government news, January 5, 2009

<http://www.xinjiang.gov.cn/10013/10031/10003/2009/50101.htm>

³⁶ “我区去年人口自然增长率控制在 11.7‰以内 顺利完成国家下达的控制目标” Xinjiang daily, january4, 2009

<http://www.xjdaily.com.cn/news/xinjiang/300313.shtml>



Photo: the family got birth control award

The Chinese explanation of the linkage between poverty and the Uyghur population growth is pointless since reducing the Uyghur population would not bring any change to the population growth in East Turkistan while there is government encouragement for millions of Han Chinese to migrate into East Turkistan each Year in order to dominate the economic resources. The annual average growth rate of the Uyghur population is far below the annual average Chinese population growth rate in East Turkistan, although China claims that the annual average Uyghur population growth rate is higher than the national level annual average Chinese population growth rate in China³⁷.

Conclusion and Demands

The dynamic part of the economy in East Turkistan is concentrated on ethnic assimilation policy service, exploitation of natural resources and facilitation of the economic dominance of Han settlers. Economic development largely concentrates on the Han populated urban areas and the Chinese military construction corps, and as a result, the economic gap and inequality between ethnic Uyghurs and Han settlers has been intensively widened. Several Chinese government policies of uplifting poverty among Uyghurs were actually designed to create more poverty and to force Uyghurs to be culturally assimilated and abandon their own land.

There are not only no logical linkages between those government policies and solving poverty, but even the fundamental roots of poverty were totally neglected. Despite the huge government

³⁷ “Analysis on the Spatial and Temporal Changes of Population and Its Influencing Factors in Xinjiang in the Last 50 Years”, Mansur Sabit and Rahman Yusuf, Human geography, volume 23, number6, Published December 2007

Chinese version: “建国以来新疆人口时空动态变化特征及其成因分析” Mansur Sabit and Rahman Yusuf 人文地理, 22 卷 6 期(2007/12)

investment on its birth control policy that was spent to reduce the Uyghur population, increasing the scale of Han Chinese migration and special economic advantages that are offered to Han migrants, the increase of investment has dominated the economy of East Turkistan and reinforced poverty among Uyghurs.

Banning Uyghur language schools and educating Uyghurs only with Han Chinese education has not brought any changes or reduced the high unemployment rate among Uyghurs besides that small group of employed Uyghur cadres that the Chinese government trained with the purpose of controlling the majority Uyghur population. Despite the Uyghur job seekers' fluent Chinese language skills and their good educational backgrounds, most of the young Uyghurs are still facing harsh discrimination in the job market that is owned by the state and monopolized by Han owners.

Heavy taxation and the double standard agricultural development policy of the Chinese government on Uyghur farmers and Han migrant farmers has put the Uyghurs in heavy debt and forced many of them to abandon their land.

In this context, the current economic strategy of East Turkistan is fundamentally designed to create poverty and shows that the Chinese government is clearly neglecting the basic underlying conditions of poverty in East Turkistan, visibly creating poor Uyghurs and wealthy Han immigrants that encourage ethnic conflict and government oppression by favoring the Chinese migrants over the local Uyghurs.

Chinese state media reported that Security Bureau of Xinjiang Autonomous Region called a meeting in March 6th, 2009 and stressed the stability of East Turkistan during the global financial crisis. Chinese security officials said: “crack down on the 'three evil forces' - terrorism, separatism and extremism – is the main aspect of stability of Xinjiang. Three evil forces may appear again to against government policies during the global financial crisis. We must efficiently use government funds to crack down them.”

It is clear to the Chinese government that Uyghurs will suffer more than any other nation in China during the global financial crisis, since most of the Uyghurs are already unemployed and living below the poverty line. However, instead of concerning the poverty relief, the Chinese government is prepared to crack down on Uyghurs who are pressured with hunger and may possibly express their dissatisfaction to the Chinese government.

The Chinese government should immediately stop the crack down on Uyghurs and should search the roots of the problems to prevent unrest.

Chinese government policy of uplifting Uyghurs from poverty should focus on developing skills of Uyghur labour force that have direct linkage to the local economy and local needs, Instead of transferring Uyghur labour force to Inland China for cheap labour or slave labour .

The Chinese government should immediately stop discrimination against the educated and skilled Uyghur labour force. It should pay greater attention to create non-farming activities and local linkage between farming and non-farming activities as well. The Chinese government

should immediately stop or put restriction on immigrating Han Chinese into East Turkistan to protect local employment and local economy.

There should be some serious changes in the discrimination policy against the Uyghurs and the favoring of Han migrants.

The Chinese government should create chances for Uyghurs to share in the benefit from the development of economic opportunities and from the rich natural resources of East Turkistan. Absence of such a strategy in East Turkistan and the deprivation of Uyghurs from the benefit of rich natural resources and local development clearly violate the right to development of every nation in international human rights law. The international community should pressure to China to not open green light for China's oppressive regime in this occupied region, and to respect the right to development of every nation.

Rukiye Turdush

March 8, 2009, Toronto