



## Introduction

This timeline gives an overview of the arrest and incarceration of Uyghur intellectuals and celebrities in Xinjiang.

This is a partial overview and does not contain the complete list of notable people who have been arrested. See more at the [Xinjiang Victims Database](https://www.shahit.biz/eng/#stats) [\\_ \(https://www.shahit.biz/eng/#stats\)\\_](https://www.shahit.biz/eng/#stats).

**14 July 2009**

**Gulmira Imin**


**(<https://humanrightscommission.house.gov/defending-freedom-project/prisoners-by-country/China/Gulmira-Imin>)**: Government employee and the moderator of *Salkin*, a Uyghur-language culture and news website. She participated in demonstrations against the deaths of Uyghur migrant workers in Guangdong in July 2009. She was arrested thereafter and sentence to life in prison for splittism, leaking state secrets, and organizing an illegal demonstration.

**August 2013**

### **Abduweli Ayup**


**(<https://www.linguisticsociety.org/news/2014/12/12/uyghur-linguist-abduweli-ayup-freed-after-15-months-chinese-detention>)**: Poet, linguist, and Uyghur educator. He and two associates were raising funds to finance new schools that focused on teaching Uyghur language where he was arrested for illegal fund-raising. He was arrested in August 2013 and, after filing an appeal, **released** **(<https://www.linguisticsociety.org/news/2014/12/12/uyghur-linguist-abduweli-ayup-freed-after-15-months-chinese-detention>)** in December 2014. 

### **April 2014**


Xi Jinping initiates the “**Strike Hard** **(<https://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2015/01/23/xinjiang-arrests-nearly-doubled-in-14-year-of-strike-hard-campaign/>)**” campaign against terrorism. 

### **15 July 2014**

#### **Ilham Tohti**

**(<https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/ilham-tohti-sentenced-life-imprisonment>)**: Economist at the Minzu University of China who was arrested and sent to life imprisonment after his home was raided in 2014. Winner of the Sakharov Prize and the Vaclav-Havel Prize in 2019. Sentenced to life imprisonment. 

### **15 August 2016**

Re-education camps **undergo major expansions** **(<https://www.ft.com/content/eb2239aa-fc4f-11e8-aebf-99e208d3e521>)**, where area sizes grow up to 269 percent  in select regions.

### **15 March 2017**

#### **Abdurehim Heyit**

**(<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/jailed-folk-singer-front-line-uyghur-struggle-190311164215395.html>)**: Uyghur singer and dutar musician arrested in early 2019, appears to have been released in late 2019. Tashpolat Teyip: Xinjiang University

president and renowned geographer, arrested and later sentenced to death.

## April 2017

### Arslan Abdulla

(<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/professors-09182018151339.html>): Former dean of Xinjiang University, missing since 2017 and is widely believed to be held in detention

## November 2017

### Halmurat Ghopur

(<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/sentence-09282018145150.html>): President of Xinjiang Medical University. Arrested in 2017, sentenced to death with reprieve.

## 15 December 2017

### Rahile Dawut

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/10/world/asia/china-xinjiang-rahile-dawut.html>): Xinjiang University anthropologist who specializes in Islamic shrines, traditional songs and folklore. She disappeared in December 2017 when travelling from Ürümqi to Beijing. In June 2021, employees from Xinjiang University **confirmed** (<https://www.rfa.org/uyghur/xewerler/rahile-dawut-06292021152846.html>) that she is currently imprisoned.

## 25 December 2017

### Adil Tuniyaz (<https://www.shahit.biz/eng/#view>):

Uyghur poet and son-in-law of Adil Tuniyaz, arrested in 2018 for promoting terrorism and religious extremism.

## December 2017

### Muhammad Salih Hajim

(<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/scholar->

[death-01292018180427.html](#)): Academic translator

arrested and later found dead in custody in 2018.

## 15 January 2018

### Abdulqadir Jalaaleddin

([https://web.archive.org/web/20200927194328/https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/actions/abdulqadir-](https://web.archive.org/web/20200927194328/https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/actions/abdulqadir-jalaaleddin-china/)

[jalaaleddin-china/](#)): Xinjiang Normal University scholar of medieval Central Asian poetry who works to preserve Uyghur culture and identity. He was arrested after his house was raided and he has been held at an internment camp ever since.

## 2018

Halide Israyil (<https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=2524>): Award-winning novelist, essayist, and

retired editor at Xinjiang Daily. She wrote an award-winning novel depicting the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang. She is

currently interned at a camp.

## 30 January 2018

### Perhat Tursun

([https://supchina.com/2020/02/05/disappearance-of-](https://supchina.com/2020/02/05/disappearance-of-perhat-tursun-uyghur-worlds-greatest-author/)

[perhat-tursun-uyghur-worlds-greatest-author/](#)): Poet, writer, and screenwriter who was acclaimed as the Uyghur Salman Rushdien. He disappeared in January 2018 and was reportedly given a 16-year prison sentence.

## 15 February 2018

### Ablajan Awut Ayup

([https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/singer-](https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/singer-05182018131924.html)

[05182018131924.html](#)): Pop singer known as the “Uyghur Justin Bieber” known for songs intending to bridge cultural gaps between Han Chinese and Uyghurs. He was taken into custody by a state security unit and has been held in an internment camp ever since.

## 15 March 2018

### Qurban Mamut

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/journalist-10182018151224.html>): Writer and magazine editor of the Communist Party-controlled magazine “Xinjiang Civilization” for 26 years before retiring in 2011. After visiting his family in the US for one month, he disappeared shortly after returning to the XUAR.

## July 2018

### Chimengul Awut

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/investigation-uyghur-poet-detained-for-editing-problematic-book-11132018144554.html>): Poet, editor in chief at the Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House. Arrested in July 2018 for allegedly editing a book that was problematic with authorities.

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