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comics as eyewitness
March 2021

Mexico

Laos

Azerbaijan

front line defenders

cypher

/ˈsɪfər/

The dictionary definition of cypher is 'a secret or disguised way of writing'. In many ways, this is the essence of comics storytelling – the image, rather than the word, is a disguise for many words, that can convey meaning, emotion, and can re/frame an entire narrative.

Rap and hip hop culture has taken the word and ascribed a new meaning: 'an informal gathering of rappers, beatboxers and/or breakdancers in a circle, in order to jam musically together.' This, too, we find relevant to this project, in that we are bringing together artists and HRDs in freestyle collaboration of activism and art with the aim of informing, elevating and inspiring.

For us, this captures the spirit of why we are working in comics and guides how we facilitate the process of creative production.

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adam shapiro

Every year, 8 March is marked as International Women's Day, and while this has become an important day for mobilization, it can also become a convenient, almost trite, way for some recognition of the work of women that goes on 365 days a year. There has, perhaps, never been a time in history in which women's rights and women's struggles have received greater attention, and yet, it seems like the mountain is getting taller the higher we climb.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic changed all of our lives, a second pandemic has taken hold, but received minuscule attention by comparison – domestic violence and violence against women. According to the American Journal of Emergency Medicine and the United Nations group U.N. Women, when the pandemic began, incidents of domestic violence increased 300% in Hubei, China; 25% in Argentina, 30% in Cyprus, 33% in Singapore and 50% in Brazil.¹ And physical safety is only part of the story – women have been disproportionately impacted economically by COVID-19 as well.

And yet, basic protections for women continue to be eroded, notably the recent decision by the government of Turkey to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention and previous moves by the Polish government to restrict women's sexual and reproductive health rights.

With this edition, we share stories of struggle, of WHRDs at the forefront of asserting basic rights and coming under attack. And ask the reader to treat every day as if it is 8 March, and work for gender justice as part of solidarity and struggle for human rights.

1 See Time Magazine: <https://time.com/5928539/domestic-violence-covid-19/>

Editorial



beldan sezen

Call it what you like. Call it femicide, female homicide; split it into groups and proportions with fancy words and categories. At the end it is what it is. Women and girls are getting killed, murdered, destroyed. Daily.

If not physically harmed or diminished, the attack is emotional and psychological. To keep women down. Their voices, wishes and needs down. To take as one pleases. To harm as needed. To control and conquer. For what? I truly don't care. This is warfare on women's bodies and beings. Physical, mental, emotional warfare. Perpetrated by intimate partners as well as by states. No sugar cancoat this rot.

March 2021



From: Recent protests against the Turkish government's decision to pull out the Istanbul Convention which specifically aims to combat and prevent violence against women.

Mexico

Nearly 1,000 women were killed in Mexico in 2020, the crime of femicide. In March 2020, emergency call centers in the country registered 26,000 calls - the most ever for a single month, a result of increasing violence and the impact of COVID-19.

But femicide is not new in Mexico and cannot be blamed on the global health crisis. It has been a health crisis in Mexico for over two decades. And in the aftermath of killings, other women end up at the forefront of searching for their daughters, campaigning for justice and against impunity, and working to hold broken families together.

In 2015, Fátima Varinia Quintara Gutiérrez was killed. Her mother Lorena began a campaign to bring the perpetrators to justice and joined a growing movement of mostly women who struggle in the aftermath of a femicide to do the work that should be done by the authorities - to investigate, to ask questions, to probe and to speak out. This is her story.

Illustrations: Eréndira Derbez ([@erederbez](#))
Estudio Plumbago ([@EstudioPlumbago](#))



**LORENA GUTIÉRREZ RANGEL:
JUSTICE WILL BRING FREEDOM**

TESTIMONY BY LORENA GUTIÉRREZ RANGEL
ILLUSTRATIONS: ERÉNDIRA DERBEZ

MY NAME IS LORENA GUTIÉRREZ. I'M
THE MOTHER OF FÁTIMA VARINIA
QUINTANA GUTIÉRREZ,

A VICTIM OF FEMICIDE ON FEBRUARY 5,
2015 IN THE COMMUNITY OF LA LUPITA
CASASVIEJAS, IN LERMA, MEXICO STATE.



FÁTIMA WAS 12 YEARS OLD. SHE WAS COMING HOME FROM
SCHOOL WHEN THREE NEIGHBORS KIDNAPPED HER, TOOK HER
TO A NEARBY FOREST, AND MURDERED HER.



THAT DAY, MY HUSBAND, SON, AND I WENT OUT TO LOOK FOR HER. WE FOUND FÁTIMA'S PARTIALLY BURIED BODY. WE SAT IN THE DITCH BY THE ROAD FOR A LONG TIME, IN SHOCK.

A WHILE LATER, THE MEXICO STATE POLICE CAME.

LATER, THE POLICE ASKED US TO GO INTO TOWN BECAUSE, WITH ALL THE EVIDENCE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED, THE TOWNSPEOPLE WHO HAD COME TO HELP US LOOK FOR FÁTIMA WERE BEATING THE MURDERERS AND WERE GOING TO KILL THEM. THEY ASKED US TO GO THERE TO STOP THEM AND TURN THEM OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES, BECAUSE THEY WOULD PAY FOR THEIR CRIME WITH PRISON.



MY BRAIN JUST REGISTERED THAT MY DAUGHTER WASN'T ALIVE ANYMORE AND I WENT TO SIT DOWN THERE.



WE WENT TO TOWN AND THERE WERE LOTS OF PEOPLE WITH TORCHES IN THEIR HANDS. THEY WERE BEATING THEM AND THROWING GASOLINE ON THEM. I YELLED TO EVERYONE, "NO! DON'T SET THEM ON FIRE, DON'T KILL THEM," AND I STOOD NEXT TO THEM. EVERYONE YELLED FOR US TO LET THEM DO IT, THAT JUSTICE WOULDN'T BE SERVED AND WE'D REGRET IT. BUT WE INSISTED, SO THEY LET THEM GO.

THAT SAME DAY, WE TURNED THE THREE MEN OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES WITH ALL THE EVIDENCE. I TOOK THEM AWAY FROM THE WHOLE TOWN TO HAND THEM OVER TO THE STATE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE. THE WHOLE TOWN WITNESSED IT. TWO WEEKS LATER, ONE OF THEM, WHO WAS A MINOR AT THE TIME, WAS RELEASED.



OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WE'VE HAD TO TALK TO ALL OF THE AUTHORITIES AND BRING ATTENTION TO THE CASE IN THE MEDIA SO THEY WOULD REALIZE HOW SERIOUS FÁTIMA'S FEMICIDE WAS.

WE HAD GIVEN THEM THE MURDERERS AND THE EVIDENCE: STATEMENTS FROM NEIGHBORS, MY STATEMENT WHEN I SAW ONE OF THEM LEAVE HIS HOUSE WITH MY DAUGHTER'S BACKPACK...

SHE WAS A LITTLE GIRL, SHE WAS COMING HOME FROM SCHOOL. SHE HAD A LOT OF DREAMS; MY GIRL HAD HER LIFE AHEAD OF HER... THEY DESTROYED NOT JUST HER LIFE, BUT THE LIFE OF AN ENTIRE FAMILY.

IN THEIR HOUSE, THEY HAD HER CLOTHES HER BLOOD-STAINED T-SHIRT, AND EVEN THE BLOODIED BUCKET WHERE THEY HAD CLEANED OFF.



DESPITE THIS, MISTAKES AND OMISSIONS IN THE INVESTIGATION BY THE MEXICO STATE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE CREATED ENORMOUS OBSTACLES FOR THE LEGAL PROCESS.

THEY DIDN'T CONDUCT EXPERT, SCIENTIFIC TESTS ON THE CRIME SCENE OR ON THE EVIDENCE SUBMITTED BY THE DEFENDANTS. WE EVEN HAD TO FIGHT FOR THE CRIME TO BE CLASSIFIED AS A FEMICIDE.

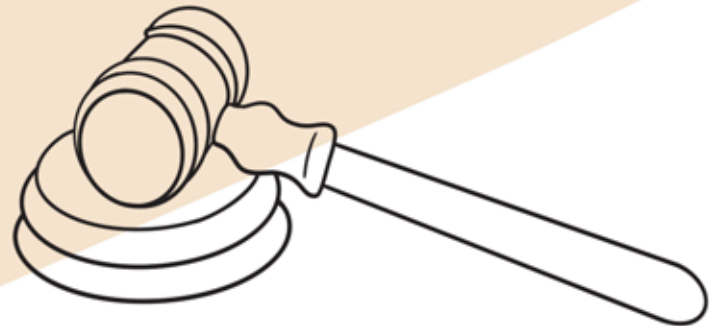


IN 2017, WE GOT THE FIRST CONVICTION: LUIS ÁNGEL WAS SENTENCED TO 73 YEARS AND 8 MONTHS. HIS BROTHER, MISAEL, WHO WAS FREED DAYS AFTER THE FEMICIDE, HAD ALREADY BEEN A FUGITIVE FOR TWO YEARS.



TWO WEEKS AFTER THE CONVICTION, MISAEL WAS ARRESTED.

I THINK IT HAPPENED BECAUSE OF THE MEDIA PRESSURE AND THE PRESSURE MY HUSBAND AND I PUT ON THE COURTS AND THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE FOR MINORS. THE TRUTH IS, IT WAS AN OUTRAGE THAT THEY FREED HIM WITH ALL THE EVIDENCE THAT EXISTED.



MISAEL WAS CONVICTED NOT LONG AFTER. AND JOSÉ JUAN WAS ACQUITTED BY A RULING THAT ORDERED HIS IMMEDIATE RELEASE. AGAIN, AFTER A LEGAL AND MEDIA BATTLE, WE MANAGED TO HAVE HIS TRIAL START IN 2020.

THE GOVERNMENT HASN'T PAID ITS DEBT TO US, BECAUSE WE HANDED THEM OVER TO THE GOVERNMENT.



IN TERMS OF REPARATIONS, WE HAVEN'T RECEIVED EITHER OF THE TWO REPARATIONS ORDERED IN THE CONVICTIONS.


I ALSO LONG FOR FREEDOM FOR MY CHILDREN, WHO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY DISPLACED WITHIN MEXICO BECAUSE OF THE THREATS MADE AGAINST US IN OUR SEARCH FOR JUSTICE. THEY HAVE TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE AND LIVE LIKE PRISONERS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN FROM THEM THE SECURITY OF LIVING AND BEING FREE, OF ACHIEVING THEIR DREAMS.

I CONSIDER MYSELF A HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER BECAUSE, BY SEARCHING FOR TRUTH AND JUSTICE IN MY DAUGHTER'S CASE, I HOPE THAT OTHER MOTHERS WILL UNDERSTAND THAT IF WE WALK AND STRUGGLE TOGETHER, WE'LL ACHIEVE THE JUSTICE THAT HAS BEEN DENIED TO US.

IN OUR DEMAND TO STOP FEMICIDES IN MEXICO, WE'LL STAND UP TO THEM TOGETHER!





MY CHILDREN AND FÁTIMA DESERVE JUSTICE AND FREEDOM.
AND CONTINUING THIS STRUGGLE IS THE ONLY WAY TO LET THE
KILLERS KNOW THAT WE WON'T STAY SILENT AND THAT
WOMEN WON'T LET THEM KEEP KILLING US.

WE WON'T LET THEM TAKE AWAY
OUR LIVES. NOT ANYMORE. TOGETHER,
WE'LL KEEP ON DEMANDING JUSTICE,
AND WE'LL STAND UP TO THEM
TOGETHER UNTIL WE
REALIZE JUSTICE.



MY STRENGTH TO KEEP GOING WITH THIS COMES FROM MY ENORMOUS LOVE FOR MY DAUGHTER. AND THAT DEEP, DEEP PAIN THAT I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN, KNOWING THAT MY LITTLE GIRL WILL NEVER COME HOME.

BUT ESPECIALLY, FROM MY ENORMOUS LOVE FOR ALL OF MY CHILDREN. A PART OF ALL OF THEM WAS KILLED ON FEBRUARY 5, AND TODAY, MY CHILDREN STILL AREN'T FREE OR SAFE.

Laos

Ms. Houayheuang Xayabouly, also known as Muay, is a Lao tour guide and shop owner. Most importantly, she is also an environmental activist and woman human rights defender. She contributes to the protection and respect for the rights of the Lao people, by highlighting the harms caused from business activities and corruption, as well as calling for redress for the communities impacted.

As a result of Muay's contribution to ensure the protection and respect for the rights of the Lao people, she was made an example of by the government of Lao PDR.

She is currently imprisoned, facing a prison sentence of 5 years and a fine of 20 million Kip, after a pre-trial detention and a summary trial where due process and fair trial standards were not complied with: she was arbitrarily arrested on 12 September 2019 and detained since then. In November 2019 she was convicted of criminal defamation and distributing anti-state propaganda under article 117 of the Criminal Code.

Muay was targeted for the legitimate human rights work that she carried out in support of the rights of grassroots communities in Lao PDR:

(text from Manushya Foundation and the #FreeMuay campaign:
<https://www.manushyafoundation.org/free-muay-from-jail-in-laos>)

Artist: Kori Song

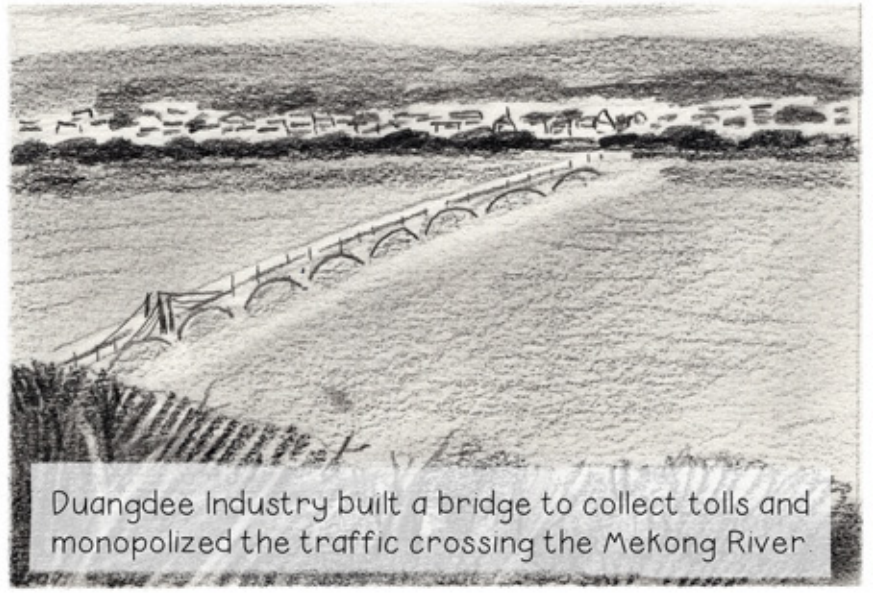
Kori Song is an illustrator and artist currently based in Hong Kong. Her illustrations are selected for the 2020 Illustrators Exhibition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair.

koriesong.com
[Instagram](#)



Pakse is located near the Mekong River; the Laos Government is trying to bring foreign investment to exploit the rich Mekong natural resources.





Duangdee Industry built a bridge to collect tolls and monopolized the traffic crossing the Mekong River



Every car that crosses the bridge needs to pay 80 baht as a toll.

Like everyone else who grew up in Laos, Muay was taught to trust the government; Muay decided to make a video to voice her opinion about this corporation with government support taking advantage of the locals.



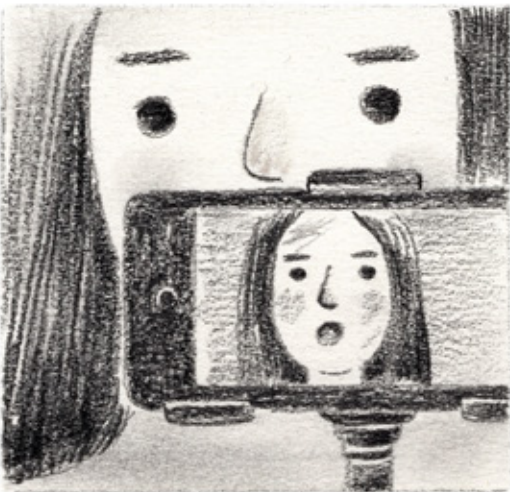
Her videos gained a lot of attention and a lot of people joined her to criticize the government and Duangdee Industry.



But Muay was not going to stop.

Muay continued to make speeches and gained influence; the authorities started to take notice and warned her to stop.

Muay continued to make new videos, uncovering the buying and selling of government positions, and exposed the corruption of the Laos government.



Muay's video was watched and liked by hundreds of thousands of people.



Laotian officials pressured Muay's employer and Muay lost her job.



After Muay was fired, she and her friends started selling T-shirts printed with text that says "I DON'T WANT THE BUYING OF JOB POSITIONS", and tried to hold charity concerts.



The authorities believed the concerts would affect stability and prevented the concerts.



Despite the setback, Muay felt that people were against corruption and she decided to continue to speak out and speak the truth.

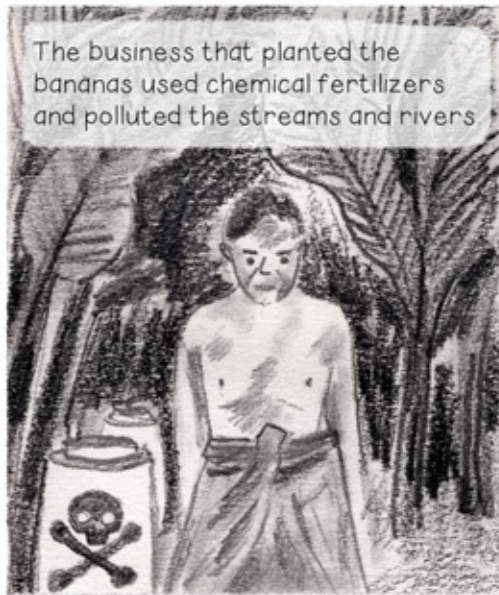


Muay continued to make speeches online, condemn Chinese business illegitimate competition practice, buying out and shutting down the local business.



The concession of the plantation of bananas to a Chinese business caused huge problems for the environment.

The business that planted the bananas used chemical fertilizers and polluted the streams and rivers



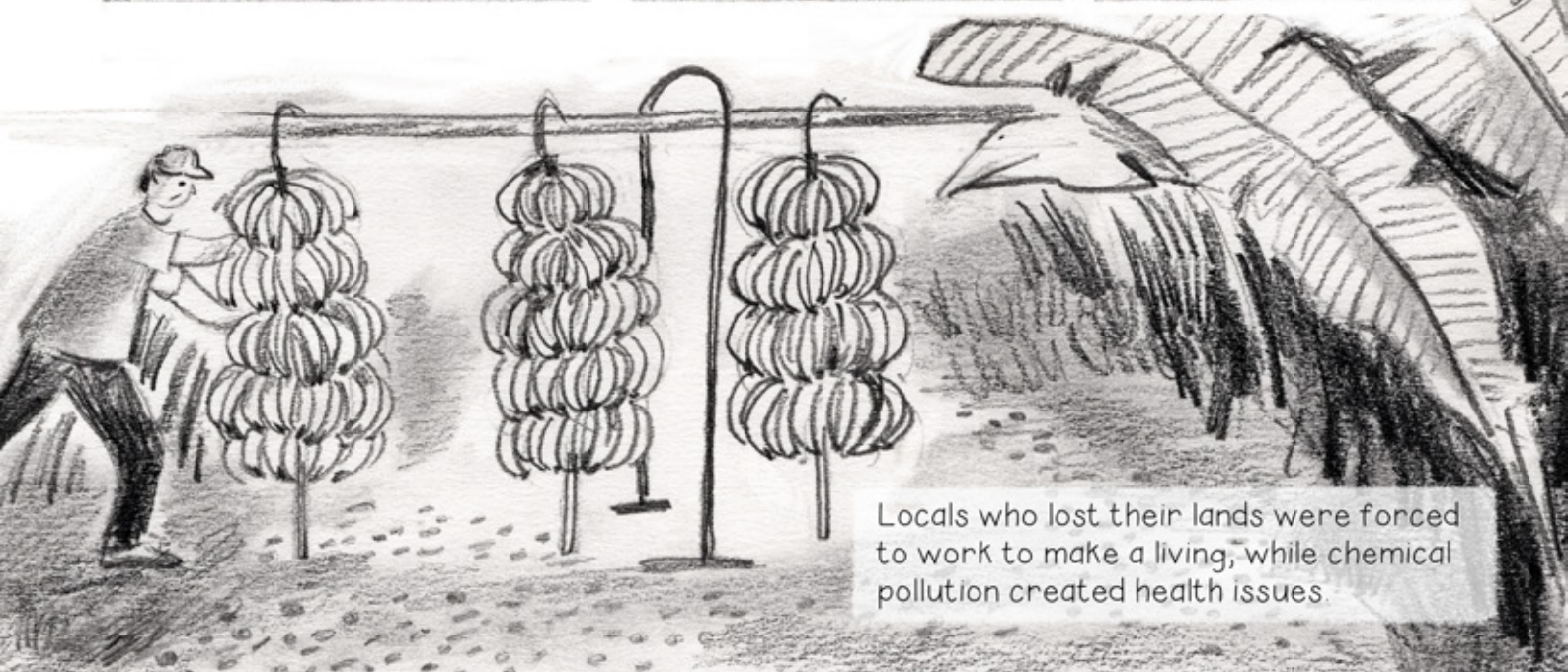
Fishes died



Workers got sick



Locals who lost their lands were forced to work to make a living, while chemical pollution created health issues.



Muay released a video, urging the Laos government to prioritize the wellbeing of citizens, and resolve the pollution problems.

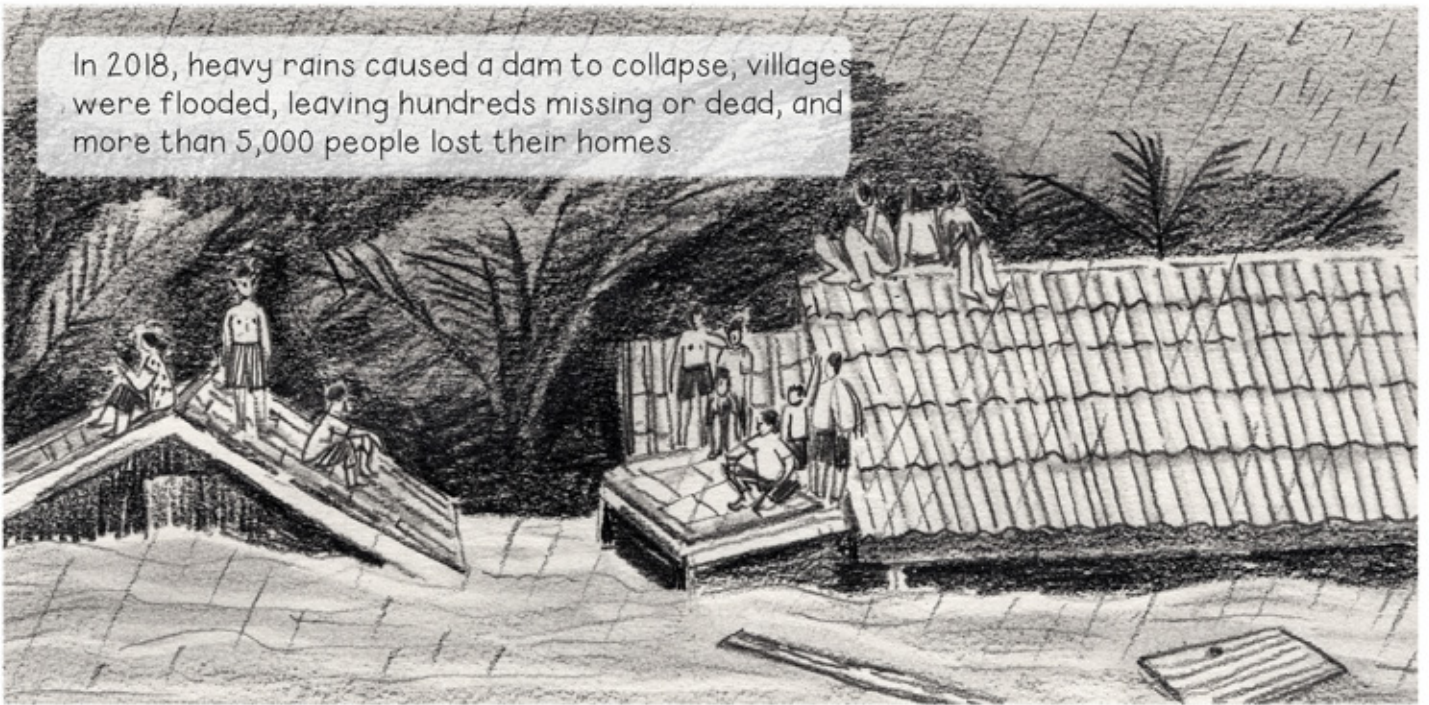


Now the government and Chinese Business see Muay and her friends as trouble makers.



The government issued a warning about using social media, that distribution of false information would be prosecuted.

In 2018, heavy rains caused a dam to collapse, villages were flooded, leaving hundreds missing or dead, and more than 5,000 people lost their homes.

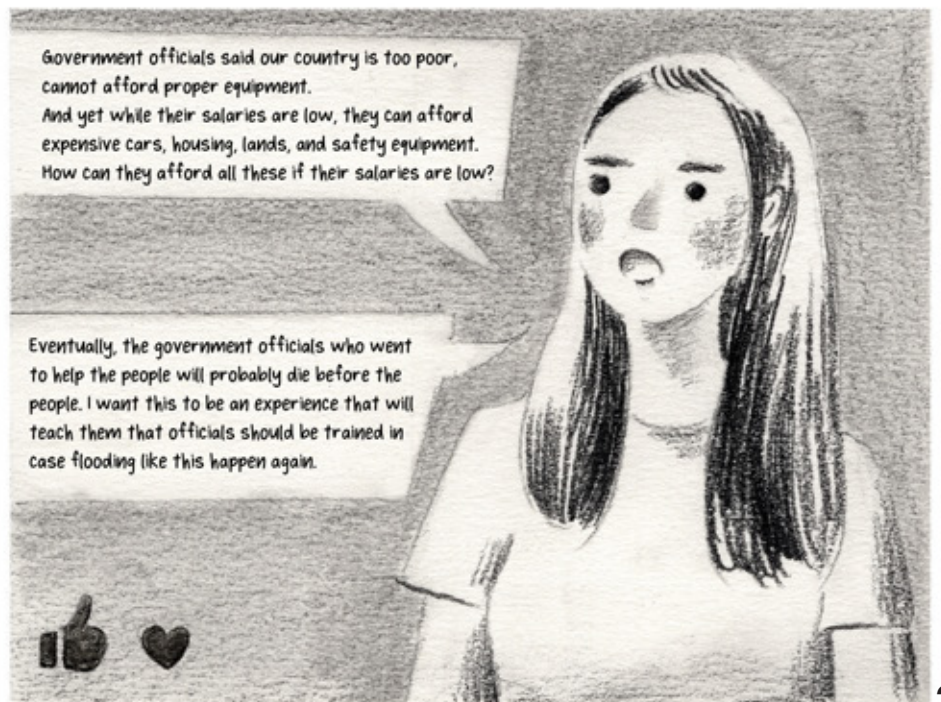


Muay asked people to donate to the flood victims or visit the flooded areas to help the people directly

Muay also released a video condemning the relief and support from the government as insufficient. This video had hundreds of thousands of views and comments.



Discontent among the people was increasing.



Government officials said our country is too poor, cannot afford proper equipment. And yet while their salaries are low, they can afford expensive cars, housing, lands, and safety equipment. How can they afford all these if their salaries are low?

Eventually, the government officials who went to help the people will probably die before the people. I want this to be an experience that will teach them that officials should be trained in case flooding like this happen again.

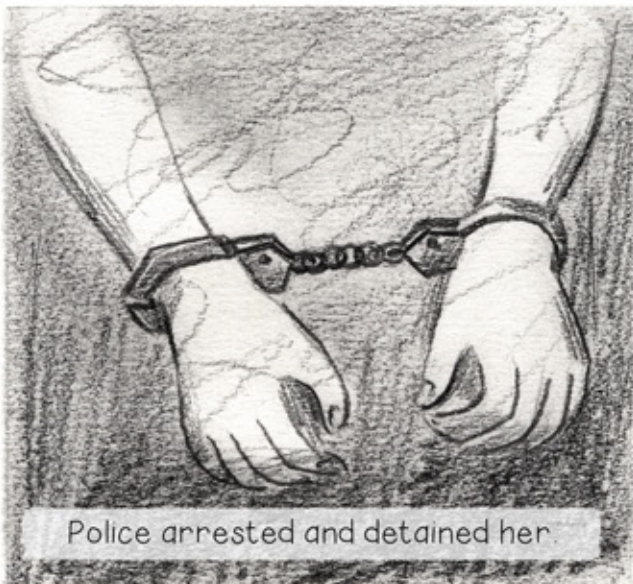
This tragedy repeated a year later, again water flooded other villages, people lost their homes.



Muay criticized the slow response of the government to the flood, and that it did not learn from the past.



This was the last time Muay freely expressed herself



Police arrested and detained her



They forced a confession out of Muay, and sentenced her to 5 years without parole.

Azerbaijan

With rates of suicide among young women and teenage girls on the rise, as well as rates of domestic violence - including killing - in Azerbaijan, authorities seem to be fixated not on addressing these problems, but rather on criminalizing feminist activists and women human rights defenders.

Gülnara Mehdiyeva has been at the forefront of both pursuing justice and promoting women's rights, as well as being targeted by state officials, police and reactionary forces in society. She has been subjected to physical abuse, harassment, smear campaigns and online violence. And for what? Because she organizes women's marches, supports women victims of violence and calls for the authorities to act to protect women and women's rights.

This is the life of a feminist activist in Azerbaijan in 2021.

Artist: Madina Zholdybekova

Madina Zholdybekova aka Madikendraws is a mixed-media illustrator born and raised in Kazakhstan, currently based in Nuremberg. In her artworks, she comprehends the different roles of women and documents a surrounding reality.

[Instagram](#)

The meaning of March 8 in Azerbaijan.

JAM-NEWS.NET: Is March 8 really a Women's Day?

"The tradition of holding rallies on March 8 has been inherited by us historically. Over time, this day has been transformed into a holiday, even with discounts on perfumes, cosmetics, and teddy bears.

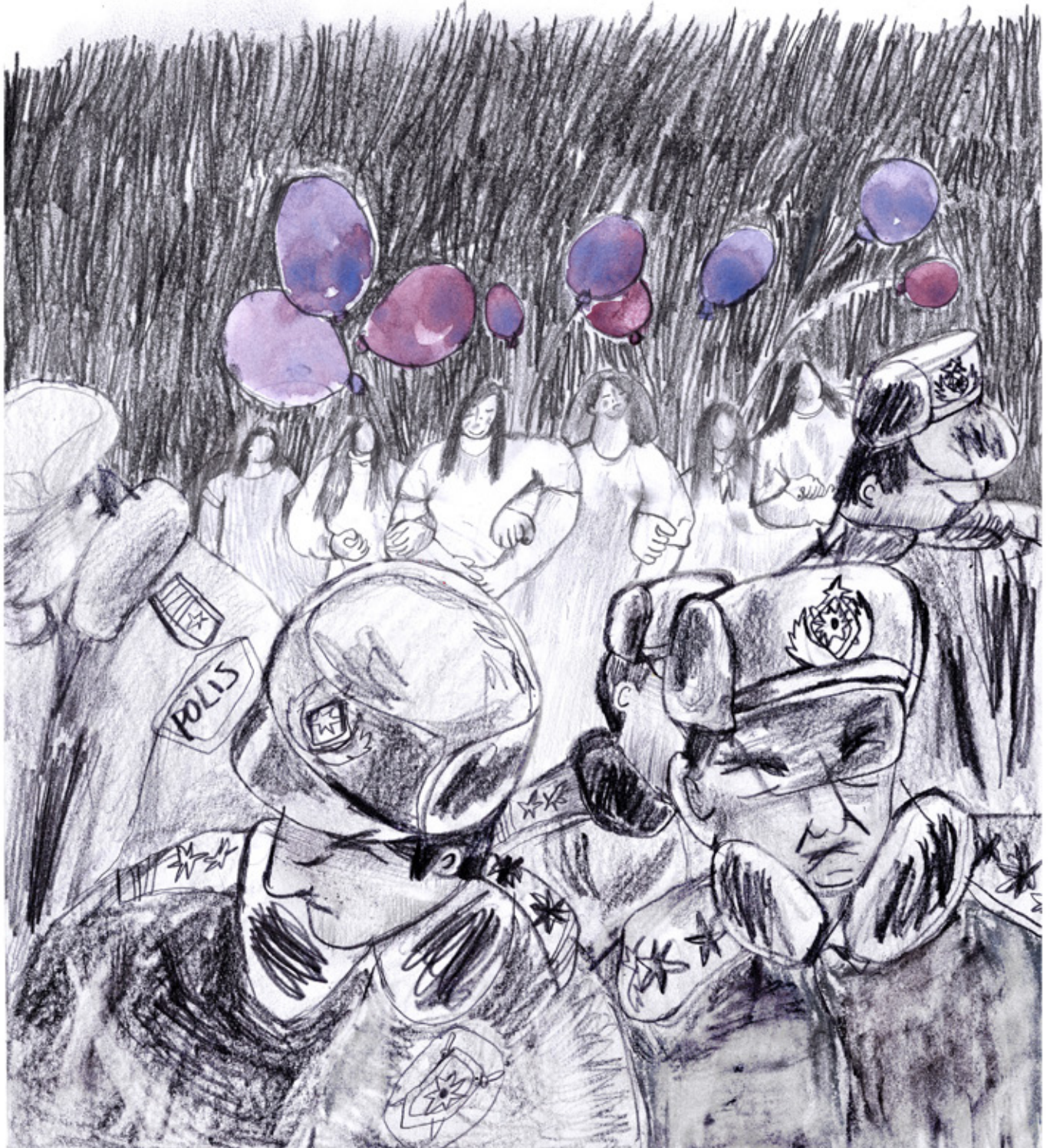


GÜLNARA:

IN 2019 WE ORGANIZED A MARCH FOR THE FIRST TIME. TWO DAYS BEFORE THE HAPPENING I WAS TAKEN FROM HOME TO THE DISTRICT POLICE DEPARTMENT, WHERE I WAS FORCED TO WRITE AND PUBLISH A STATEMENT SAYING THAT THE MARCH WAS CANCELED. I WAS FORCED TO WRITE, BUT AS SOON AS I WAS RELEASED, WE AS THE TEAM DECIDED TO GO TO THE MEETING. NOTHING WAS CANCELED. FOR THIS MARCH, WE DID NOT WANT TO NOTIFY THE AUTHORITIES; WE DIDNT SEND THEM A WARNING.



OC MEDIA: 'Indeed the model of patterned behaviour [by the authorities] absolutely works towards all mass protests, which are our constitutional right, and there was no illegal activity in this case', Shahla Ismayil [heads local women's rights group the Women's Society for Rational Development] said, adding that participants were not using 'political slogans'.



OC MEDIA:

"Fake" women

The participants were then attacked by a group of 10 middle-aged women, who attempted to break their phones and other equipment in front of the police officers who looked 'the other way' and did not intervene.

The women shouted at the participants: 'You need a man', 'You are promoting marriages between men here', 'Women should not marry each other'. Several participants of the march told OC Media that they were certain the women were sent by the authorities to disrupt the rally. 'One of the elderly women who appeared unexpectedly at the rally shouted hysterically, and insulted us, and then grabbed my scarf and began to choke me with it', Hamida Giyasbeyli, one of the marchers, told OC Media.

'It was quite clear that these women were fake and that they were paid to undermine the participants' confidence using Azerbaijani society's usual methods of psychological pressure — to shame, insult, accuse', said Giyasbeyli.

YOU NEED
A MAN





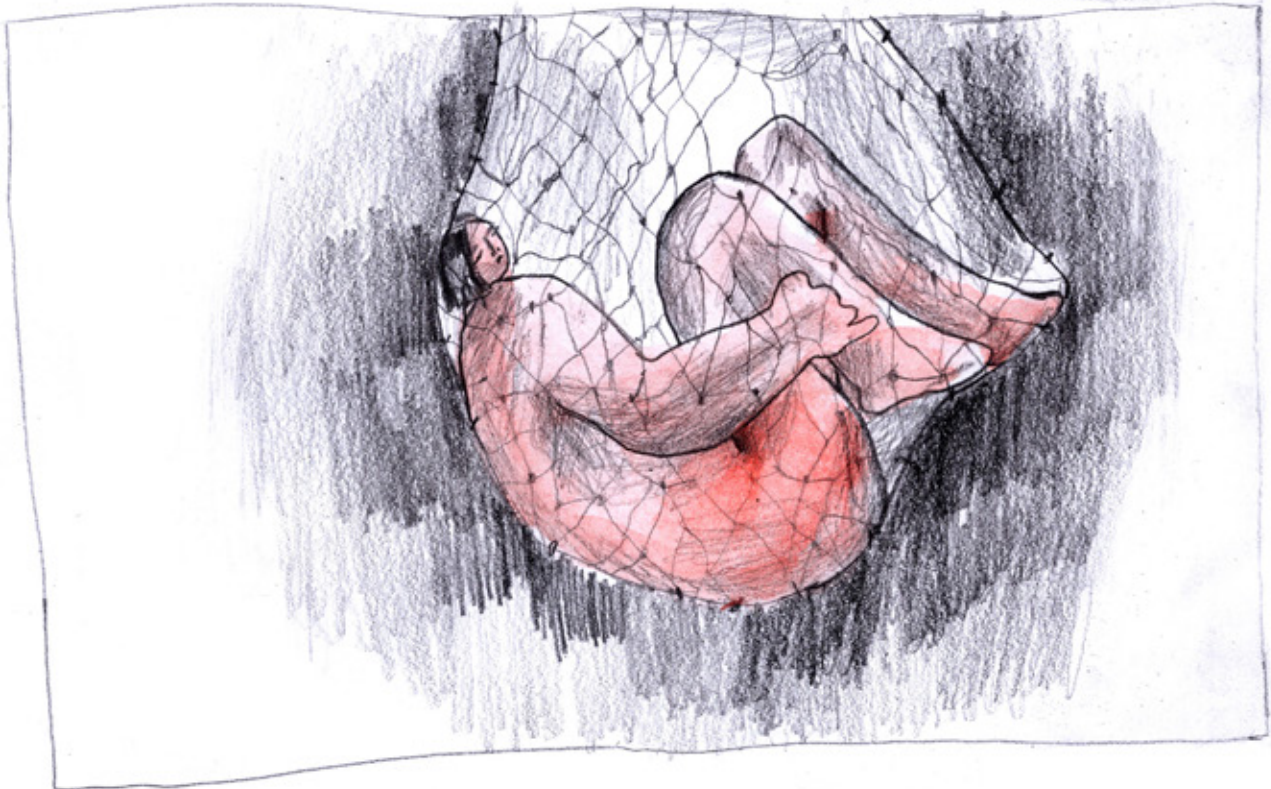
LATER, ON OCTOBER 20, 2019,
WE HAD OUR SECOND MARCH. EVERY DAY DURING THE WEEK OF
THE MARCH WE HAD READ IN THE NEWS ABOUT THE MURDERS
OF WOMEN AND DECIDED TO ACT. THE MARCH WAS CALLED
"DO NOT ENDURE! JOIN OUR MARCH!"
THIS TIME WE NOTIFIED THE AUTHORITIES,
BUT WE WERE DENIED PERMISSION FOR THE MARCH.
OF COURSE, WE DISOBEYED.

**YOU ARE PROMOTING
MARRIAGES BETWEEN
MEN
HERE**



**WOMEN
SHOULD
NOT MARRY
EACH
OTHER**

NEXT, FOR MARCH 8, 2020, WE ANNOUNCED ANOTHER MARCH. THE BAKU ADMINISTRATION REFUSED OUR CHOSEN LOCATION AND OFFERED TO HOLD A MARCH IN THE VILLAGE OF LOKBATAN, WHICH IS LOCATED ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF BAKU. WE NATURALLY DID NOT OBEY. ON THE DAY OF THE MARCH, I NOTICED THAT SOMEONE ATTEMPTED TO HACK MY TELEGRAM ACCOUNT. AND 3 DAYS AFTER THE MARCH, MY EMAIL AND FACEBOOK WERE HACKED.



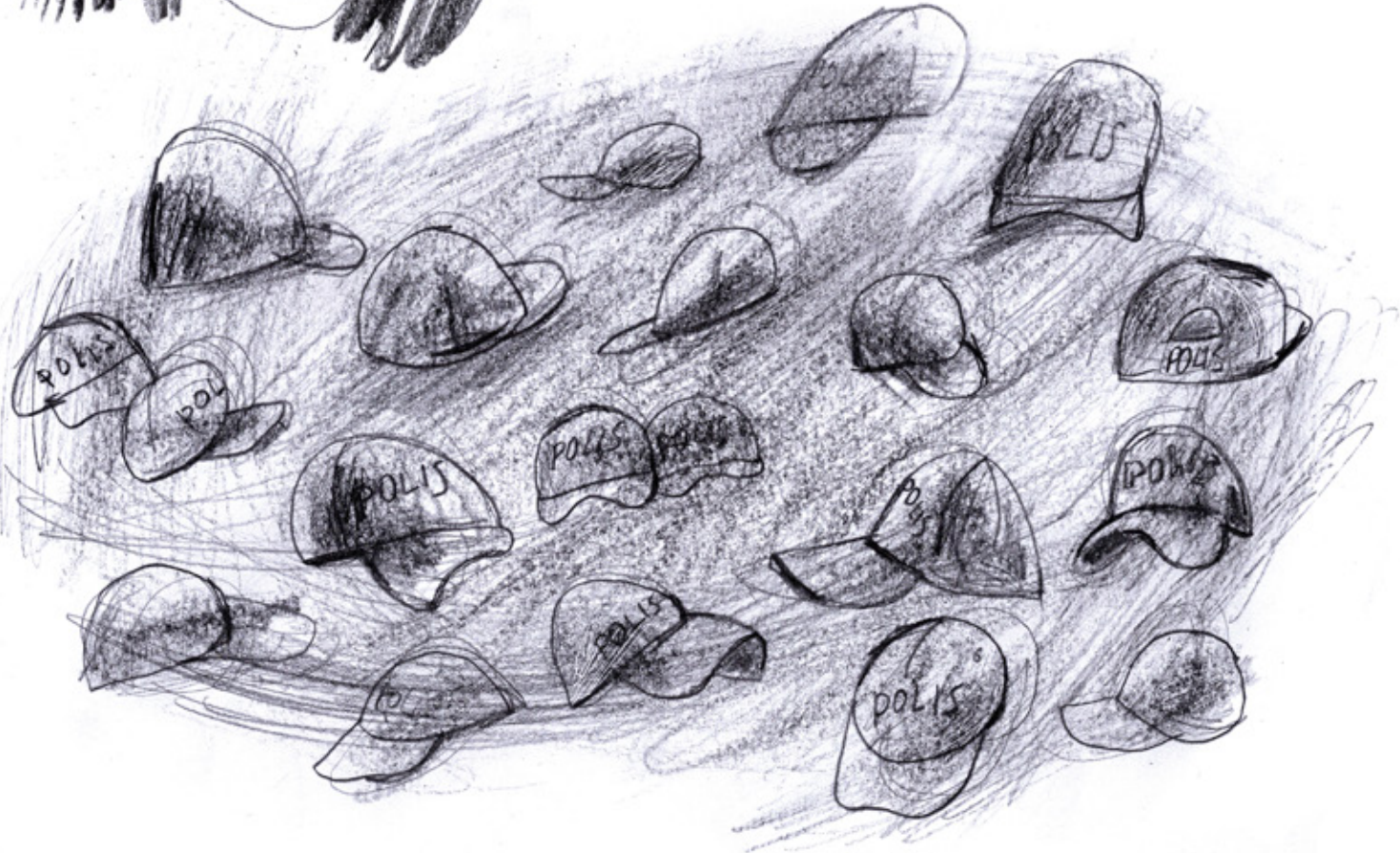
Before and after the demonstration, the organization committee was faced with repression by the government. On 28 February, Gülnara Mehdiyeva's personal information was spread on the internet. (Her profile was hacked after the 2020 8 March protest). On 3 March, Narmin Shahmarzade's facebook profile was hacked by the government. On 8 March, before the demonstration, Aytaç Aghazade and Vafa Naghi were kidnapped by police officers.

At the protest and at the police station, Zhala Bayramova was beaten and diagnosed with thoracic crush injury and crushing of her right and left knee joint and distal third of the left shin. Aytaç Ahmadova, Gülnara Mehdiyeva, Narmin Shahmarzade were detained. Narmin Shahmarzade and Zhala Bayramova were sexually harassed by the police officers together with other participants. On the same evening, the government's hackers started to spread Narmin Shahmarzade's photos (including many sex scenes), and Narmin lost control of the profile. They changed her Facebook name to "Şamtutan Narmin (Slut Narmin) and shared personal photos and chats on her profile. Three days later, the government hackers also hacked Vafa Naghi's Facebook profile and shared her personal photos on other platforms. Yesterday (18 March), the government hackers attempted to hack Zhala Bayramova's profile but were unsuccessful.





WE HAD A FEMINIST GROUP ON FACEBOOK WITH ABOUT 300 MEMBERS. NEWS BEGAN TO ARRIVE THAT THE POLICE WERE GOING TO THEIR HOMES, QUESTIONING THEM ABOUT THEIR STUDY, PLACE OF WORK, REQUESTING PERSONAL INFORMATION FROM THEIR RELATIVES. BUT THE POLICE DID NOT OPENLY SAY THAT IT WAS BECAUSE OF PARTICIPATING IN A FEMINIST GROUP.



* Killing women is political
* Free streets belong to us
* I'm here for Leila
* Do not tolerate violence



EARLIER THIS YEAR, IN FEBRUARY, A YOUNG WOMAN COMMITTED SUICIDE. IN HER INBOX I FOUND CORRESPONDENCES WITH HER, WHICH REFERRED TO THE END OF 2019. SHE TALKED ABOUT SAVING MONEY AND WANTING TO LEAVE FOR TURKEY, SINCE SHE SUFFERS FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. HER FATHER SAID THAT "IF YOU BECOME A PROSTITUTE, I'LL KILL YOU, SELL CAR AND PAY OFF THE POLICE WITH THE MONEY, OR MAKE YOU DRINK POISON".

THE GIRL SAID THAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HER, THESE MESSAGES SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. I POSTED THESE SCREENSHOTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THE WHOLE SOCIETY. VARIOUS TV CHANNELS BEGAN TO DISCUSS THIS, ON SOCIAL MEDIA, TOO. SOME PEOPLE, INCLUDING ON TV CHANNELS, SAID THAT, 'FEMINISTS BRAINWASH THEIR BRAINS. YOUNG GIRLS ARE FORCED TO GO AGAINST THE FAMILY. FEMINISM KILLS ...'



AFTER THAT, MY VOICE MESSAGES WERE POSTED ON HER FACEBOOK PAGE. I'D SENT THOSE MESSAGES TO MY FRIEND IN 2018. I HAD PROBLEMS IN MY PERSONAL LIFE AND I WAS GOING THROUGH A LOT OF STRESS. THE PAGE SAID THAT THIS GIRL (ME) IS SCHIZOPHRENIC AND SOMEONE LIKE ME CANNOT HELP OTHER GIRLS. THE MESSAGES WERE TAKEN WHEN MY ACCOUNTS WERE HACKED LAST YEAR.

* We put on masks, but we are not silent
 * A woman's place is everywhere
 * Rape - 5000
 Murder - 50,000
 Dismemberment - 100,000
 (here numbers indicate a bribe price)
 * Freedom is the best decoration for a woman



OC MEDIA:

On February 4, feminists in Azerbaijan held a rally in front of the Government building holding posters that read 'The Murder of Women is Political'. The protest came one week after the brutal killing of a woman in Baku. It was a brutal murder of 32-year-old Banu Maharramova whose dismembered body was found in the trash bin in Baku's Nasimi district a week later. Local police alleged that she was killed by her 75-year-old father-in-law, Idris Maharramov. Police reported that after killing the woman, Maharramov dismembered her body, stuffed the parts into cellophane bags, and threw them in trash bins in the neighboring district. According to neighbors, Banu Maharramova was living with her two young children, as well as her in-laws, while her husband lived outside of the country.

After the incident, Idris Maharramov was detained by the police. He remains in custody, suspected of committing premeditated murder. The investigation is ongoing.

News of the killing sparked a wave of discontent on social media under the hashtag #banuüçünsusma (don't be silent for Banu).



"The government already created the image of "prostitutes" for the feminist, with trolls insulting feminists under every [social media] post. We are afraid to go outside for sudden attacks from the government (they could easily blame traditions). The constant fear of personal information being spread and waiting for the subsequent cyberattacks affects our psychology and results in nightmares day or night."



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