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Table 1 Mr. Leysanli's Triumphant Defiance against Flogging

We have information from a number of sources (<http://www.millishura.com>, <http://savalansesi.blogspot.com/>, <http://www.azgala.com/> as well as <http://azoh.blogfa.com/> and <http://www.azr.baybak.com/>), including our own and all are complementary. Rather than translating them individually, we decided to collate them together and present the events as they unfolded. Where we make assumptions, they will be highlighted.

Date	Unfolding events
2005	Some Background on Flogging One of the policies of Iranian authorities on Southern Azerbaijan is to Balkanise the historic Azerbaijan and in time remove the historic name of Azerbaijan from Erdebil, Sunqur, Zengan, Qezvin, Hemedan, Erak ... (and now they pose the same risk to Maki, Salmas, Khoy, Sulduz, Maragha, Qoshachay, Soyuq Bulaq). When they carved out Erdebil as a newly founded province from the historic Azerbaijan, the authorities hoped that no one would speak in their mother tongue and they were quick to pass flogging sentences to Southern Azerbaijani prisoners of conscience given half a chance to humiliate them. One such sentence was passed against Mr. Leysanli in 2005, at which time more than 200 Southern Azerbaijani activists signed a petition on 21 July 2005 (http://tomarlar.blogspot.com/2005/07/blog-post.html) and demanded the repeal of the sentence, else they offered themselves instead of Mr. Leysanli.
Early December 2007	Recent Background Over the last few months, the Iranian authorities had been tightening the screws over Southern Azerbaijani activists to create a repressive atmosphere. When the Iranian reformist ex-president Mr. Khatami visited Tebriz on 21 December 2007 for a stage managed speech to students in Tebriz, the Southern Azerbaijani students rebuffed him. At the same day (21 December, a Southern Azerbaijani activist from Sulduz suffered the callous 50 number of floggings. We sensed that these were probably to gauge the mood in Southern Azerbaijan for a possible public flogging but all the signals were there that even if the authorities repress our nation, the national defiance mood cannot be undermined. As a result, the authorities seemingly decided to inflict the heinous act of flogging in the controlled environment, in a Court of Justice! Belonging to the Ministry of Justice. And now the roll out of the incidents
20-28 December	The Southern Azerbaijani media was in a sombre but defiant mood and reflecting any meagre incident in this relation. All the sources of information, including our own, were indicative of a show down of force.
Later in the day on: 29 Dec 07	Mr. Leysanli succeeded to make a telephone call from Erdebil prison to Mr. Hesən Erk, in Tebriz, informing him that "I am determined not to give in to the act of flogging in whatever mode. The Iranian authorities have to get me by



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	force.”
30 Dec 07 Early morning	The authorities spread bogus SMS messages to lower the morale informing them that Mr. Leysanli was flogged.
Published at 12.02 GMT / 15.32 Tebriz time	<p>A reliable eyewitness published the events (http://www.millishura.com) as he saw in the Court of Law including those possibly indirect accounts, which he received afterwards. These are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.30 a.m. GMT: Leysnli was brought in to Erdebil Court by 17 fully-armed military officers and one Guard officer.• The number of armed officers overwhelmed the court and their presence wreaked havoc among the people present there.• As ordered by the Prosecutor, two armed officers accompanying Leysanli entered a chamber of the Court for the execution of the sentence.• Tens of Southern Azerbaijani activists had managed to get to the perimeter of the Court waiting to get a glimpse of Leysanli.• The cameras of the authorities were busy of filming these activists.• The Prosecutor ordered Leysanli to get ready for the execution of the sentence.• Leysanli responds that he is defending the nation of Southern Azerbaijan and will not yield as long as he breathes• The outraged Prosecutor resorts to an uncompromising mood.• Leysanli is not budged and rather assume a determined self-defence condition.• The Prosecutor changes the mood and state that I swear by my children that this flogging is not aimed at hurting you but to satisfy the letter of the law and promises that the beatings will be delivered in a mild fashion.• Leysanli cries out: The age of slavery is over. Long live the proud and libertarian nation of Azerbaijan• The Prosecutor approaches Leysanli and assumes a begging and kind mood; touching his head and says: “my son please let the sentence be carried out. Do not mind the business of the State. Think of your three children. Wait a while and be quiet, as thing will be fine and your soul will gain freedom by going home.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leysanli responds that “my soul and my children’s convenience are devoted to the freedom of Southern Azerbaijan. Mr. Proescutor: my struggle aims to gain freedom to all including your children.”
8.30 GMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leysanli was kept in the Court until 12.00 (Tebriz Time)• The Prosecutor orders to return Leysanli back to Erdebil prison.• There follows an indirect account of the events, the authenticity of which is confirmed by emerging news later.



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p.m. 30 Dec 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After transferring Leysanli to the prison, <i>Rahbari-niya</i>, a non-Azerbaijani and an extreme pro-Farsi judge threatens Leysanli for harsh punishments.• Leysanli was then transferred to his cell in the prison but a number of prison personnel attack him.• Leysanli stands up against the attack and rebuffs them. The attackers are in vain.• Leysanli is then transferred to a special chamber.• It is understood that this outcome leaves the officers in vain.• Later in the day, Leysanli was taken to <i>Rahbari-niya</i>, the judge.• The Judge orders the soldiers to bring Leysanli to the position of flogging and he shouts that “I will have the honour of flogging him myself.”• The soldiers disobey the judge and none makes any move towards Leysanli.• Using a foul language, the judge threatens each and every soldier present but in vain.• The soldiers are angered from the behaviour of the judge but eventually the judge resorts to silence.• Leysanli was then transferred to his cell and later in the day was ordered to be transferred to Eher prison.
Later in the day on 30 Dec 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This triumphant news was distributed all over Southern Azerbaijan by SMS messages.• The defiance of Mr. Leysanli’s wife (Mrs. Ruqeyye Leysanli) and his mother are reported to match that of himself.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It has been confirmed that Mr. was transferred to Eher prison that day but these will be reported in another Update.
31 Dec 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leysanli called Mr. Hesən Erk in Tebriz and confirmed the manner in which he rebuffed the authorities.
31 Dec 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mrs. Ruqeyye Leysanli (Mr. Leysanli’s wife) called Voice of America and gave an interview to them confirming that the threat and the proceeding of the authority was in vain.