

TAJIKISTAN Valijon ALIBOYEV (aged 45), Saidumar SHARIPOV (aged 23)

Valijon Aliboyev and Saidumar Sharipov are believed to be facing imminent execution. Their only hope is that the President grants clemency.

Saidumar Sharipov and Valijon Aliboyev, an ethnic Uzbek, were sentenced to death on 24 November 2000 by the Supreme Court of Tajikistan. Saidumar Sharipov and three co-accused, Saidvali Zulfikorov, Rizvon Ziroyev, and Nigora Gadoyeva, were accused of a series of crimes including murder and robbery. Valijon Aliboyev was accused of having taken part, with the others, in the kidnapping of a boy in 1999 in order to extract money from the boy's family.

The three co-accused were sentenced to prison terms of between 16 and 25 years. There are reports that the family of one of the co-accused bribed the authorities and he escaped a death sentence as a result. According to these reports, the family of Valijon Aliboyev did not have enough money for a bribe.

According to Valijon Aliboyev's wife, her husband was arrested in his flat early in the morning on 11 May 2000. Reportedly, he was taken to the Ministry of the Interior where he was kept for 18 days and beaten by law enforcement officers.

When Mrs Aliboyev last visited her husband, on 5 June 2001, she found him in poor health, his stomach was swollen and he was suffering pain in his kidneys.

Mrs Aliboyev told Amnesty International: "I am not saying that my husband is not guilty. He should redeem his guilt in prison according to the law, but he shouldn't be executed. Please help me that my five children won't lose their father."

Valijon Aliboyev and Saidumar Sharipov have reportedly applied for clemency, but have not yet received a reply.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the Criminal Code of Tajikistan, a former republic of the Soviet Union, adopted in 1998, 15 crimes carry a possible death sentence. At least 38 people were sentenced to death during 2000. According to international observers the number of death sentences handed down in the first quarter of 2001 is three times higher than in a similar period last year.

Information on the practice of the death penalty is regarded a state secret in Tajikistan. The government does not publish comprehensive statistics on death sentences and executions. Families often do not know whether their relative is still alive on death row; they do not know where the execution takes place and are not told where the body is buried.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Russian, English or Tajik or your own language:

- urging the President to use his constitutional authority to commute the death sentences handed down on Valijon Aliboyev and Saidumar Sharipov, as well as all other death sentences that come before him;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of crime and their families, but pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively

than other punishments, and is brutalizing to all those involved in its application;

- urging for a prompt and impartial investigation into allegations that Valijon Aliboyev was beaten after he was taken to the Ministry of the Interior on 11 May 2000, with the results made public and those found responsible brought to justice, in line with Tajikistan's obligations under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

- urging that a moratorium be imposed on death sentences and executions pending a comprehensive review of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO

(Please note that it can be difficult getting through to fax numbers in Tajikistan. If a voice answers, repeat 'fax' until you hear the signal; otherwise it is advisable to leave your fax machine on auto-redial if possible):

Emomali Sharipovich RAKHMONOV
President of the Republic of Tajikistan,
 Respublika Tajikistan, g. Dushanbe, pr. Rudaki 80, Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki; Prezidentu RAKHMONOVU I.Sh.; Tajikistan
Faxes: + 992 372 21 25 20 / + 992 372 21 18 37
Telegrams: Prezidentu Rakhmonovu, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
E-mails: primer@pds.td.silk.org
Salutation: Dear President Rakhmonov

Bobokhon Bobokhonov
Procurator General of the Republic of Tajikistan,
 Respublika Tajikistana, 734043 g. Dushanbe, prospekt A. Sino, 126, Prokuratura Respubliki; Generalnomu prokuroru; BOBOKHONU, B.; Tajikistan
Telegrams: Generalnomu prokuroru, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Talbak Nazarovich NAZAROV
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan,
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 Verkhovny Sud Respubliki Tajikistan
 Predsedatelyu DAVLATOVU U.A.
 Tajikistan

Fayzullo MAKHMUDOV
Director of the prison where Valijon Aliboyev and Saidumar Sharipov are kept,
 Respublika Tajikistana, g. Dushanbe, SIZO-1, Direktoru MAKHMUDOVU, F.;
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R.Z. MIRZOYEV
Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Russia,
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and to diplomatic representatives of TAJIKISTAN accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.