

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED INGUSH ACTIVIST RELEASED

Activist Magomed Khazbiev was released on 26 March after having been arrested on 23 March and held in administrative detention in Ingushetia. He was repeatedly beaten by police, and denied access to medication he relied on.

Magomed Khazbiev, a 31-year old civil society activist and prominent local politician in Ingushetia, the North Caucasus Republic of Ingushetia in the Russian Federation, was arrested together with his two brothers, Berd and Murad for 'organizing street disturbances' on 23 March. The same day, Magomed and Berd Khazbievs attended a street protest in Nazran, but deny any role in organizing it or stirring disturbances.

Magomed Khazbiev was stopped and beaten by law enforcement officers as he was leaving the site of the protest. Shortly after his return home, his house was raided by police, and he and other men from his family were beaten, following which the three brothers were driven away. On 24 March, Magomed Khazbiev was sentenced to 10 days of administrative detention while Murad and Berd Khazbievs received shorter detention terms. On Saturday 26 March, Magomed and Berd Khazbievs were released before the end of their detention period, reportedly due to an order from the Head of The Republic of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov. Their brother Murad had already completed his sentence on 24 March.

No more action is required at this time from the UA network. Many thanks to all of those who sent appeals.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Magomed Khazbiev is a member of the Expert Council under the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Russian Federation and a well-known public critic of the Ingush authorities. He is also the main editor of the popular news website Ingushetiyaru.com, which has been exposing corruption and human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies in Ingushetia. The site's two previous owners and editors, Magomed Yevloev and Maksharip Aushev, died in suspicious circumstances in 2008 and 2009 respectively. On 12 February 2011, Magomed Khazbiev suddenly felt unwell and was hospitalized with a stomach haemorrhage. He was in Moscow at the time preparing for a press-conference on human rights violations in Ingushetia. He believes he may have been poisoned by the secret services. He was discharged from the hospital on 1 March 2011.

Magomed Khazbiev was taking medicines necessary to treat his abdominal condition and alleviate the pain which. The family repeatedly attempted to give these medicines to him but the police at the temporary detention facility in Malgobek where Magomed Khazbiev was serving his sentence, refused to take them.

The protest which Magomed Khazbiev attended prior to his arrest was organized by the relatives of Ilez Gorchkhanov, a young man who had been abducted on 21 March by unidentified armed men believed to be law enforcement officers. Around 80 protesters blocked one of the main roads in the centre of Nazran and demanded that the authorities inform them of Ilez Gorchkhanov's whereabouts and put an end to forcible disappearances in Ingushetia. Magomed Khazbiev claims that police used excessive force against the protesters.

During Magomed Khazbiev's detention, Amnesty International spoke with the officer in charge of the detention facility where he was held who stated that Magomed Khazbiev did not require any medicines. However, the organization had seen a copy of a medical report diagnosing Magomed Khazbiev with an acute intestinal ulcer causing internal bleeding and prescribing him with medicines which he still needed to take.

Amnesty International has released a public statement expressing concern about the detention of the Khazbievs and calling for a prompt, impartial and effective investigation into the allegations of their ill-treatment (<http://amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR46/014/2011/en/077240c2-9761-49da-8123-b4d7aff24445/eur460142011en.html>). Amnesty International has also issued an Urgent Action calling on the Russian authorities to investigate Ilez Gorchkhanov's forcible disappearance (<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/015/2011/en>), and an Urgent Action expressing concern at reports that Magomed Khazbiev was being denied access to his medications and necessary healthcare. The Urgent Action also called on the authorities to ensure that he was protected from further ill-treatment and receives full and immediate access to medical care in accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/016/2011/en>).

Further information on UA: 89/11 Index: EUR 46/017/2011 Issue Date: 29 March 2011