

AI Index: PRE 01/263/2010  
30 July 2010

## **China convicts Uighur web managers on state security charges**

Amnesty International has condemned the closed trial and conviction of three Uighur website managers on state security charges.

Dilshat Perhat, web manager and owner of the Diyarim website was sentenced to five years by an Urumqi court in a closed trial on 21 July; Nureli, web manager of Salkin was sentenced to three years; and Nijat Azat, web manager of Shabnam was sentenced to 10 years, according to Dilmurat Perhat, Dishat's brother.

The three websites were among the most popular Uighur language news and community forums operating in Xinjiang prior to the 5 July 2009 riots.

"The Chinese governments' attempts to control all online activity in Xinjiang is not going to silence those with genuine grievances," said Sam Zarifi, Asia-Pacific Director for Amnesty International. "These three Uighur web managers must be released."

Dilmurat was repeatedly warned by Xinjiang authorities against speaking to the media about his brother Dilshat's case. He had earlier complied with their demands out of fear that his brother could be convicted. "But today, I'm not worried because my brother has been sentenced already," Dilmurat told Amnesty International from the United Kingdom.

"This government charge against my brother and the other Uighur websites was for endangering state security, but they didn't do anything" said Dilmurat, who had worked with his brother Dilshat in managing the Diyarim website.

"My brother was supportive of the Chinese government always. We ran the website from 2002 to 2009 - for seven years, we didn't have any problems with the Chinese government."

Dilmurat says that the secret nature of the Urumqi trials were a result of government fear of protest, because "the Chinese government has not any evidence to sentence these people."

He suspects that web managers came under pressure from authorities due to articles that anonymous people posted on their websites prior to the 5 July, 2009 riots in Urumqi. The riots led to 197 deaths according to official figures, and more than 1,400 detentions.

Amnesty International's investigation of the riots suggests that the Chinese government used excessive force in dealing with the riots and in their aftermath, arbitrarily detained Uighurs, and mistreated detainees. AI's findings were published in June 2010 as *'Justice, Justice' - The July 2009 protests in Xinjiang, China*.

From 3 July 2009, Dilmurat's brother notified Chinese security officials five to six times to notify them that articles calling for a peaceful demonstration had been posted anonymously on the Diyaram website, and that he had deleted them. A demonstration notice was posted again at 3:30 am on Sunday 5 July, on the Diyarim, Salkin and Shabnam websites, and the web managers were not able to remove them until later in the day.

Following the riots, the three websites were all closed down by government censors.

Amnesty International is calling for the release of the Uighur language web managers and for the release of other arbitrarily detained Uighurs.

Prominent Uighur journalist Hairat Niyaz was recently sentenced to 15 years imprisonment through a secret trial in Urumqi, for little more than giving interviews to Hong Kong media.

Uighur writer Gulmira Imin, who had contributed to the Salkin website, was sentenced to life imprisonment in April 2010 for 'splittism, leaking state secrets and organising an illegal demonstration.' During her trial she alleged torture and ill-treatment in detention.

## **Related**

[\*Justice, Justice - the July 2009 protests in Xinjiang, China\*](#)

[\*China sentences Uighur journalist to 15-year prison term\*](#)