

Press Release

Hizb ut Tahrir Members Carry a Beacon of Light, and the Authorities in Russia Oppress and Torture Them This Behaviour Reminds Us of Fascism and Nazism!

(Translated)

Since the beginning of 2021, all the details of the brutal torture taking place inside the basements of the Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN) in Russia have been exposed to public opinion. On 23/2/2021, the Novaya Gazeta published video footage of torture. It included a video of two prisoners in Yaroslavl Prison in 2017, one of whom was a Muslim and the other a Christian.

In one of the videos, the prisoner is shown being forced to completely strip naked, lie flat, and expand his legs, while a large number of police officers surrounded and watched him. Among those around him was a policewoman (a woman!) Carrying a device known as an "anal expander" in her hand to use on him. When the prisoner refused this immoral act, they violently threw him on the table and collectively beat him with truncheons. Journalists say that this prisoner most likely died in hospital due to internal bleeding.

The other video shows about 15 police officers taking turns in brutally beating one of the Muslim detainees, after his imprisonment period has ended about to be released from prison, and it clearly shows how each one of them was sweating while panting from the intensive effort he exerted in beating the poor prisoner. It turned out that the reason for the prisoner's torture was because he showed his indignation at the behaviour of prison employees after they threw his personal belongings on the ground, which included a copy of the noble Quran. Fortunately, he remained alive after this torture, but remained in the hospital for two weeks after his release.

Also, among the details that have become known about the brutal torture of detainees in the FSIN in Russia, is that they are persecuting prisoners by using other prisoners who collaborate with the prison authorities, whom they call "activists". The Gulagu.net human rights project published documented facts about torture and rape in an Irkutsk prison, where "activists" extracted confessions from other prisoners at the request of security services personnel.

We will not list here all the facts about the brutality of the torture that detainees are subjected to in the basements of the FSIN in Russia, which was mentioned by Gulagu.net. We will only mention what the director of the FSIN in Russia Aleksandr Kalashnikov said at the federal commission meeting on 25/2/2021 on the outcome of the investigation in his department in the Irkutsk region. 41 persons in connection with torture have been identified from among the detainees. 47 people were identified as victims of rapists' actions. It has also been officially proven that three of those who raped detainees suffer from HIV / AIDS.

We do not know the religious background of the detainees who were tortured in the Russian Penitentiary Service centers in Irkutsk, but these facts about the inhumanity in dealing with detainees in Russia are what have been published since the beginning of this year only, they give an idea about the nature of the work of the penal execution centers across Russia. If we know that Muslims in Russia are being tried without legal basis and placed in solitary confinement under harsh conditions, this will give an idea of the conditions faced by Muslims arrested on trumped-up charges such as terrorism and fundamentalism. This is in addition to

the suffering and torture of the Muslim detainees by starving them, when they are only given pork to eat.

The Memorial Center for the Defense of Human Rights has published on its website a report that includes a list of 297 political detainees. The report stated that the names on the list are almost exclusively Muslim names. It added that most of the detainees were members of the Islamic Hizb ut Tahrir (191 detainees), in addition to other Muslims, such as belonging to the Tablighi Jamaat, followers of Saeed Nursi. The report confirms that this list is incomplete. The names mentioned are only the names of those whose cases are available for study. And that the number of persecuted persons found by the Memorial Center is at least three or four times more, but their names were not mentioned in this list either because the required information about them did not arrive, or it has not been studied fully yet. The center states that these are only the numbers that the center was able to discover.

The report confirms that several years ago, those accused of affiliation with Hizb ut Tahrir were classified in Russia as a 'terrorist' organization without a legal basis for this classification. Accusations were brought against them under the pretext that they were a 'terrorist' organization. These charges were brought against them under an article of the Russian Criminal Code, which carries a sentence of up to 3 years in prison, under the pretext of participating in the activities of extremist organizations.

The report continues that with the tightening of legislation, in addition to the behaviour followed in the application of the law, charges are being brought today under a new article of the law called "**organizing the activities of a terrorist organization and participating in the activities of this organization,**" which stipulates a penalty that may reach life imprisonment. The prison terms imposed by the courts have also extended to 24 years in prison.

It is known that the laws differ from one country to another and from one law to another, but the false accusation is not disputed in the different laws and canons and among the peoples, so describing something with what contradicts it goes against rational basis. Likewise, the accusation that Hizb ut Tahrir engages in 'terrorist' acts is turning the truth upside down. People, near and far, testify that Hizb ut Tahrir has adopted a method for its call that is based on thought, argument and evidence, and it does not allow itself or its members to deviate from this method. Its political, cultural and intellectual work among the people of the world testify to that. Despite these facts, members of Hizb ut Tahrir are still being tried in unfounded cases and with fabricated charges.

With the tightening of the laws, mass arrests of Hizb ut Tahrir members took place in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Chelyabinsk, Tyumen and other cities. And after the occupation of Crimea, this reached the Muslims there. However, the security services were not limited to restricting the work of the court and issuing prison sentences against Muslims in inhuman conditions, but they began fabricating charges even in places where the prison sentence is being carried out. Here are some of these dark scenes:

Mirzaparot Mirzasharibov was sentenced in St. Petersburg to 5 years in prison because of his membership in Hizb ut Tahrir. When he arrived in prison on 21/3/2019, the "activists" group beat him brutally. When he entered the prison's FSIN Execution room, the employee held a knife to his neck, and then, along with another employee, began to ask questions about Hizb ut Tahrir. Mirzaparot answered the questions of the two employees and told them about the party's work. He stressed that his work is intellectual and does not use material means and that his case is fabricated, as he was tried for "terrorism" according to Article 205, Clause 2, Part 1 of the Penal Code, and after 5 years in prison he was sentenced again for 3 years in prison, and that he must spend 2 years in the room prison, and one year in a maximum security prison.

Galolin Rinat, a resident of the city of Chelyabinsk. Galolin was imprisoned for 5 years in a maximum security prison because of his membership in Hizb ut Tahrir. On the day of his release, a new charge was fabricated against him. He was arrested and prevented from leaving

prison, and he was sent for investigation. On 17/8/2018, he was sentenced again to 8 years of imprisonment in a maximum security prison, according to Article 205, Clause 5, Part 2, entitled "Participation in the activities of a terrorist organization." This is despite the fact that Hizb ut Tahrir is not a 'terrorist' organization and cannot be classified as such.

Rahman Hajayev Zikrullah was sentenced in Moscow to 7 years of imprisonment for his membership in Hizb ut Tahrir. After the end of his sentence, he was again convicted of advocating the ideas of Hizb ut Tahrir among the detainees, and on 13/12/2018, he was sentenced according to Article 205, Clause 5, Part 2 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation, and he was sentenced to 14 and a half years in prison. That is, after serving 7 years in prison on charges of working with Hizb ut Tahrir, Zikrullah was imprisoned again on the same charge, but in a new language format, and for a double prison term.

On 27/1/2021, it was confirmed that a similar ruling was issued against a resident of Kazan, **Usmanov Zakir John**. In 2017, he was sentenced to 6 years of imprisonment according to Article 205, Clause 5, Part 2, and in October 2020, the First Eastern Military Court issued another sentence of 9 years of imprisonment in a maximum security prison according to Article 205, Clause 1, Part 1, "Calling for a Terrorist Organization", Article 205, Clause 2, Part 1, "Publicly justifying terrorism," is required for him to stay in prison rooms for 5 years out of 9 years.

Asghat Hafizov, sentenced in December 2017 to 17 and a half years in prison. They added to the article for which he was tried, which is the organization of 'terrorist' activities (Article 205, Section 5, Part 1 of the Penal Code) and fundamentalism (Article 282, Section 2, Part 1 of the Penal Code), and they added another accusation of participating in 'terrorist' activities (Article 205, Section 5 Part 2 of the Penal Code) as well as the recruitment of members for a 'terrorist' organization (Article 205 Section 1 Part 1).

Another new case is being prepared against the one with the 16-year prison sentence, Hizb ut Tahrir member **Hamid Ighamberdiev**, who has been transferred from Belgorod Prison to solitary confinement in Moscow.

Each of these cases is a blatant injustice case, and at the same time they do not adequately express the true magnitude of the inhumanity in dealing with Muslim detainees, especially the members of Hizb ut Tahrir.

Russia's chief human rights advocate, **Lev Ponomarev**, said it is difficult to tolerate the brutality of the regime. In his speech at the lecture organized by the Memorial International Center, Lev Ponomarev said: "Muslims from Hizb ut Tahrir are not accused of carrying out or preparing for terrorist acts, they are not charged with such acts not in any court ruling, and they are sentenced to strange terms of up to 24 years, 20 years, 18 years, we must shout from every corner about this issue ... Trials are held regularly and people are imprisoned more and more, until they have reached into the hundreds, and some are imprisoned for a second time. From my point of view, this is the real fascism."

Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾ **"And they resented them not except because they believed in Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy"** [Al-Buruj: 8].

Hizb ut Tahrir is not a 'terrorist' party, and such accusations against it are nothing but a condemned lie, which can be easily refuted by simply taking a look at the party's history and its extended activity since its establishment in 1953.

We thank Lev Ponomarev and the Memorial Center for Human Rights defense, for their interest in the matter of Muslim political prisoners, and for their activity in defending those persecuted in Hizb ut Tahrir cases. We also thank all other human rights organizations, lawyers, human rights defenders and activists for their defense of the interests of Muslim political detainees, and all those who did not remain impartial and offered assistance to the innocent

Muslim detainees. We ask Allah (swt) to grant patience to the Muslim detainees and their families, indeed Allah is with the patient ones.

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