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Pakistan Postpones Russian Man's Execution so Mom Can Say Goodbye

By Allison Quinn

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Pervez Musharraf, former president of Pakistan, speaking at the WEF in 2008.

Russian diplomats on Sunday were looking into reports that Pakistani authorities had executed a Russian man on death row since 2003 after having earlier agreed to hold off on executing him until his mother arrived to say goodbye.

Akhlas Akhlaq was convicted in 2003 of attempting to assassinate Pakistan's then-President Pervez Musharraf, an accusation the inmate's father vehemently denied Sunday, Russian news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Pakistani authorities never had sufficient evidence and "caught the wrong guy," the father, Akhmad Akhlaq, insisted.

On Sunday, after Russian diplomats had earlier said they managed to have Akhlaq's execution delayed, Reuters cited a source in the local Punjab government as saying a Russian man had

been executed.

A spokesperson for the Russian Embassy in Islamabad was cited by the Interfax news agency as saying the information was still being checked and there was no official confirmation of Akhlaq's execution.

Earlier on Sunday, Yevgeny Fidchuk, Russia's ambassador to Pakistan, said in comments carried by RIA Novosti that Pakistani authorities had agreed to delay the execution until Akhlaq's mother arrived.

“Supposedly it has been delayed until the arrival of his mother, but, as you understand, there are no guarantees of this,” Fidchuk was cited by RIA Novosti as saying.

The news of the supposed delay came after the elder Akhlaq was told by law enforcement authorities to get to the prison immediately if he wanted to say goodbye to his son before his imminent hanging.

Akhlaq's mother was set to arrive on Monday, according to Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

Russian diplomats have said they were doing “everything they could” to make sure the execution was delayed, having sent an official request to Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, Damir Galiullin, the deputy consul of the Russian Embassy in Islamabad, told RIA Novosti.

Another man accused of plotting to kill Musharraf, Arshad Mehmood, was executed on Friday, according to Reuters.

Akhlas Akhlaq grew up in Volgograd, Russia, but later relocated to Pakistan to help his father, a Pakistani national, with his business.

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