

Moscow Court to Deport Gay Novaya Gazeta Journalist to Uzbekistan

August 02, 2017



Ali Feruz / Facebook

A Moscow court ruled on Tuesday that a journalist writing under a pen name for the investigative newspaper Novaya Gazeta had violated Russian immigration laws and would be deported.

Moscow police detained Khudoberdi Nurmatov, an Uzbek citizen, during a document check in front of the newspaper's offices, an Amnesty International representative in Moscow [wrote](#) on Facebook.

"A court in Moscow just ruled to deport a good friend of mine, an activist, a journalist of Novaya Gazeta, an openly gay man, a citizen of Uzbekistan - [Ali Feruz](#)," wrote Ivan Kondratenko, who works with Amnesty International in Moscow.

"I don't know if Ali will survive in Uzbekistan," Kondratenko wrote. "Homosexuality is a crime in this country punished by years of imprisonment."

Nurmatov is currently in a Moscow detention center, but has ten days to appeal the ruling.

During the hearing, Nurmatov told the court he had no intention of returning to Uzbekistan.

"I want you to take into account that all my relatives are Russian citizens: sister, mother, and brother," Nurmatov [told](#) the court, Novaya Gazeta reports, adding that he had studied in Russia. "In 2008, I left Uzbekistan definitively, and I do not intend to return there."

Nurmatov, who has no official identity documents, had applied for asylum in Russia, but his request was refused.

"He appealed [the asylum ruling] in court a few months ago," wrote Kondratenko on Facebook. "He learned today from police that the court refused to accept his appeal."

This is not Nurmatov's first detention by police. In March, Moscow police, acting on a request from Uzbekistan's security services, took him into custody, Novaya Gazeta previously [reported](#).

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