

Moscow Court Rules Against Gay Uzbek Journalist's Asylum Claim

October 20, 2017



Ali Feruz (Avilov Alexander / Moskva News Agency)

A court in Moscow [denied](#) an openly gay Uzbek journalist's asylum request on Friday despite claims he would be tortured if he were deported to Uzbekistan, Russian media reported.

Khudoberdi Nurmatov, who writes under the pen name Ali Feruz for the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper, has been held in immigration detention since August.

He has been without official identity documents since 2012 and was previously refused asylum in Russia in 2015.

Europe's top human rights court in August [ruled](#) that deporting Nurmatov would be illegal without a court consideration.

On Friday, a Moscow district court turned down Nurmatov's claim against the Russian Interior Ministry's immigration department for refusing to grant him asylum.

The Interior Ministry's attorney said ahead of the court ruling that the immigration department found no grounds to grant Feruz asylum.

"Our decision was made in the course of lengthy inspections and with the study of many international documents," the defendant's attorney was [cited](#) as saying by the Moskva news agency.

Nurmatov's lawyer said after the decision that a number of violations were committed during the process.

"We will decide how to send him to a third country," said the attorney, Irina Biryukova, as cited by Novaya Gazeta.

Novaya Gazeta had reported that Moscow police took Nurmatov into custody in March on a request from Uzbekistan's security services. The journalist reportedly tried to commit suicide shortly after he was detained.

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