The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Jails Migrants' Rights Activist 14 Years for 'Terrorism'

May 24, 2023



Bathroom Khamroyev. **Photo from personal archive**

A migrants' rights activist who worked with Russia's oldest human rights group was sentenced to 14 years in prison late Tuesday on charges of terrorism for Facebook posts.

Bakhrom Khamroyev, 59, was detained the day Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.

He was previously a member of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning civil rights group Memorial, which was ordered to disband in 2021 and whose members have been regularly subjected to police raids in recent years.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) claimed that Khamroyev had published six Facebook posts expressing support for Hizb ut-Tahrir, a pan-Islamist organization that Russia banned as a terrorist group in 2003.

Russian authorities initially accused Khamroyev of publicly justifying terrorism, then changed the charges last fall to those of leading a terrorist organization.

Moscow's Second Western Military Garrison Court found Khamroyev guilty and handed him a 14-year sentence in maximum-security penal colony, Memorial said on Twitter.

Prosecutors had requested a 21-year sentence for Khamryev.

Related article: Russia Jails Islamic Publisher for 17 Years on Terrorism Charges

Khamroyev maintains that he had defended the rights of Muslims accused of ties to Hizb ut-Tahrir and was never himself a member.

Hizb ut-Tahrir is banned in a dozen countries including Russia but operates freely in the United States, United Kingdom and Ukraine.

Memorial linked the criminal charges against Khamroyev to his activism, which included providing legal aid to Muslims accused of terrorism.

Human Rights Watch's (HRW) deputy director for Europe and Central Asia called the terrorism accusations against Khamroyev "ludicrous."

Sota, an independent news site that regularly reports from court hearings, reported that Khamroyev will be transferred to a penal colony after serving the first three years of his sentence in jail.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/05/24/russia-jails-migrants-rights-activist-14-years-for-terrorism-a81252