

2015-10-01

Fråga-svar

Tadzjikistan. Grupp 24

Fråga

Information om den politiska grupperingen Grupp 24 och dess ställning i Tadzjikistan.

Svar

Grundande och nuvarande ställning i Tadzjikistan

Grupp 24 grundades 2012 av Umarali Quvatov, en tadjjikisk affärsman i exil. Efter gruppen uppmanat till protester mot regeringen stämplades den som en extremistgrupp och förbjöds i oktober 2014. Det resulterade också i att flertalet sociala mediesidor blockerades i Tadzjikistan. Flera källor har rapporterat detta; nedan följer ett urval.

Amnesty International (2015-03-06):

Umarali Kuvvatov - along with other Tajikistani business leaders, opposition politicians and activists - was one of the founders of "Group 24", which has publicly criticized the widespread corruption under Tajikistan's President Rahmon. In Tajikistan he faced charges of "economic crimes" and "extremism", which appear to be politically motivated.

In October 2014 Tajikistan's Supreme Court pronounced "Group 24" an "extremist" organization and banned all its activities in Tajikistan. The Tajikistan authorities also stated that a number of suspected "Group 24" members had been added to an international wanted list for "the attempt to overthrow a government" and "extremism".

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR, 2014-10-09):

The prosecution service issued a statement on October 7 banning an opposition movement called Group 24 on the grounds that it was an extremist organisation seeking to overthrow the government.

The group had issued a call on Facebook for an anti-government rally to be held in the capital Dushanbe on October 10. The event never happened.

In an interview for a Russian news agency on October 7, Tajik interior minister Ramazon Rahimzoda described Group 24 members as "criminals" who wanted to destabilise Tajikistan on the instructions of unspecified "foreign masters".

Group 24 was set up by in 2012 by Umarali Quvvatov, a businessman who fled the country after his assets were taken over. He claimed that powerful regime figures had appropriated his business. An attempt to extradite him from Dubai last year failed, and he remains abroad.

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After Quvvatov's Facebook statement went viral among Tajik internet users, many websites were suddenly blocked. The Asia-Plus news agency calculated that around 300 sites became unavailable including Facebook, YouTube and the Russian social media site V Kontakte.

Freedom House (2015-05-05):

The government declared the Moscow-based Group 24, led by Tajik oppositionists in exile, an "extremist organization" in October for encouraging peaceful protests in Dushanbe, making participants in the group or its activities subject to prosecution under the same statutes covering terrorist organizations.

Efter Quvatovs död har hans kusin Sharofiddin Gadoev, som också lever i exil utomlands, tagit över ledarskapet. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL, 2015-03-12):

Quvatov's cousin and business associate, 29-year-old Sharofiddin Gadoev, who has been living in self-imposed exile in Spain since 2013 [was] elected /.../ the movement's new leader.

IWPR har intervjuat ett antal personer som bedömer att Grupp 24:s inflytande är högst begränsat och att de tadzjikiska myndigheterna överskattat det hot gruppen innebär för regimen. IWPR (2014-10-09):

So is Group 24 really capable of mobilising discontent with the Tajikistan? Not really, according to political analyst Parviz Mullojanov.

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A retired police officer told IWPR that the security forces had over-reacted in a bid to show their political masters how well-prepared they were, and had inflated the danger posed by Group 24 to strengthen their case.

"Their exaggerated reading of the information circulating on the internet sparked fears at the highest level about [a form of] opposition which effectively does not exist in Tajikistan," he said.

Repressalier

Nedan följer en kronologisk sammanställning av repressalier som riktats mot medlemmar av Grupp 24 och som rapporterats i media.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL, 2013-01-02):

Quvatov was arrested in Dubai on December 23 at the request of Tajik authorities.

IWPR (2013-06-05):

[Quvatov] was detained in Dubai in December at the request of the Tajik authorities, on charges of business malpractice. In April, a court in Dubai approved an extradition request.

RFE/RL (2013-09-26):

A Tajik opposition figure wanted by Dushanbe on charges of involvement in a \$1.2 million fraud case has reportedly been released from a detention center in Dubai.

IWPR (2014-10-09):

Six days later, police detained the parents, sister and brother-in-law of another Group 24 member, Sharofiddin Gadoev, a cousin of Quvvatov who has been in Spain since last year. The Tajik government has issued an international warrant for his arrest on fraud and smuggling charges, according to RFE/RL radio.

RFE/RL (2015-01-16):

Tajikistan has formally asked Turkey to extradite fugitive opposition politician and businessman Umarali Quvatov.

RFE/RL (2015-03-06):

Fugitive Tajik opposition politician and businessman Umarali Quvatov has been killed in Turkey, associates and officials said.

Quvatov was shot in the head on a street in Istanbul by an unidentified attacker late on March 5/.../

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Tajikistan formally requested his extradition in January.

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Tajik Interior Minister Ramazon Rahimzoda said in January that several Group 24 members had been detained in Russia and were expected to be extradited to Tajikistan, and that three more associates of Quvatov were arrested in Tajikistan.

At least two Tajik activists have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms since October for their alleged association with Quvatov's group.

BBC News (2015-03-06):

Umarali Kuvatov had been living in exile in Turkey and was killed by a shot to the head late on Thursday.

His Group 24 movement, which opposes the government of President Emomali Rakhmon, was banned in October.

Tajikistan had accused Mr Kuvatov of various crimes and asked for him to be extradited, but Turkey had refused.

The Turkish authorities arrested him in December for alleged visa fraud, but he was freed shortly after, Turkish media reported.

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His killing comes two days after a Tajik court sentenced another member of Group 24 to 17 years in prison for attempting to seize power and insulting the president.

Amnesty International (2015-03-06):

Associates of Umarali Kuvvatov, a founding member of a Tajikistan opposition group, are at grave risk of further attacks after he was shot dead in Istanbul last night, Amnesty International said today.

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"We have received reports of death threats and attempted assassinations of dissenters from Tajikistan in foreign countries in recent years, but this is the first actual killing of a Tajikistani political activist. It begs the immediate question: how many more are at risk?"

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Tajikistani political dissenters and those accused of religious "extremism" have also been abducted and forcibly returned from several former Soviet countries.

RFE/RL (2015-03-13):

Two Tajik activists have each been sentenced to 16 1/2 years in prison for being members of a banned political opposition movement [Group 24].

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Activist Umedjon Solehov was sentenced last week to 17 1/2 years in prison on the same charges.

IWPR (2015-03-16):

On March 12, prosecutors in Dushanbe asked judges for 18-year sentences against two men currently on trial for being members of Group 24. Asia-Plus news agency reports that Firdaus Muhiddinov and Farhod Karimov are accused of "calling for extremist activity" and organising a criminal and extremist group.

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On March 12, Quvvatov's successor as head of Group 24 was named as his cousin Sharofiddin Gadoev, also a businessman. He too is wanted in Tajikistan, on forgery and smuggling charges.

Jamestown Foundation (2015-03-24):

Turkish police have identified a Tajikistani national named Suleyman Qayumov as the lead suspect in the murder (Hurriyet Daily News, March 21). While no connection between Qayumov and the Tajikistani government has been established, the murder sparked comparisons of the killing of Russian dissident Boris Nemtsov (Asia-Plus, March 9). The government did not ease suspicions when, barely a week later, it sentenced two members of Group 24 to 16.5 years in prison (Ozodi, March 13).

RFE/RL (2015-04-09):

A Dushanbe court on April 9 found Mahmadali Jobirov and Muhammadrizo Shamszoda guilty of organizing activities of Group 24 /.../

The court sentenced them to three and a half years and three years in prison, respectively.

RFE/RL (2015-08-17):

Including the seven men, a total of 10 suspected members of Group 24 have been arrested in Russia in recent months [at the request of Tajikistan's government].

Three already have been extradited to Tajikistan and sentenced to lengthy prison terms /.../

Human Rights Watch (2015-08-17):

Sobir Valiev /.../ was detained on August 11, 2015, at the request of the Tajik government by Moldovan migration police /.../

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In March 2014, after the killing of Kuvvatov, Valiev became the deputy head of "Group 24." On March 14, representatives of

Tajikistan's Internal Affairs Ministry tried to summon Valiev for an interrogation, although he was already living outside the country. Within the next few days unidentified people sprayed the word "traitor" on the walls of Valiev's family home. Fearing further persecution, Valiev's family members were forced to flee the country shortly thereafter for Turkey.

Valiev's relatives told Human Rights Watch that in late 2014 and early 2015, Tajikistan's security services interrogated them on several occasions in Dushanbe, threatening "serious consequences" if Valiev did not return to Tajikistan. At the time, Valiev was living in Kyrgyzstan and frequently traveling to Turkey for business.

Tajik authorities have charged Valiev with "public calls for carrying out extremist activity" (art. 307(1)(2)) and "organizing an extremist community" (art. 307(2)(1)) of Tajikistan's criminal code, charges they have used in a number of cases that appear politically motivated.

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Khudoydodova, a member of "Group 24" who lives in St. Petersburg, had also publicly called for democratic reforms in Tajikistan. After learning on July 12 that Tajik authorities might be preparing to kidnap or forcibly return her to Tajikistan, Khudoydodova fled Russia to Belarus, where she had planned to apply for refugee status with the United Nations refugee agency in Minsk. Tajik authorities have also charged her with extremism and are seeking her extradition.

Denna sammanställning av information/länkar är baserad på informationssökningar gjorda under en begränsad tid. Den är sammanställd utifrån noggrant utvalda och allmänt tillgängliga informationskällor. Alla använda källor refereras. All information som presenteras, med undantag av obestridda/uppenbara fakta, har dubbelkontrollerats om inget annat anges. Sammanställningen gör inte anspråk på att vara uttömmande och bör inte tillmätas exklusivt bevisvärde i samband med avgörandet av ett enskilt ärende. Informationen i sammanställningen återspeglar inte nödvändigtvis Migrationsverkets officiella ståndpunkt i en viss fråga och det finns ingen avsikt att genom sammanställningen göra politiska ställningstaganden. Refererade dokument bör läsas i sitt sammanhang.

Källförteckning

(alla källor är hämtade 2015-09-30)

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