

TURKMENISTAN

Jehovah's Witnesses

Sokhbet AGAMYRADOV

Age: 18 years old

Date and place of arrest: On 13th August 2018

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 27th August the judge in the city of Mary sentenced him to one year in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2410

Mekan ANNAYEV

Date of birth: 22nd June 1999

Date and place of arrest: On 23rd July 2018, Turkmenbashi

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 23rd July 2018 the city court of Turkmenbashi sentenced him to two years in prison in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Other information: It is unclear why he unusually received the maximum penalty, whereas people in the same circumstances generally receive one year prison terms.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2402

Serdar ATAYEV

Age: 18 years old

Date and place of arrest: On 13th August 2018

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 28th August the judge in the city of Mary in East Turkmenistan sentenced him to one year in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Source: http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2417

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2410

Ruslan Khadynyaz oglu ARTYKMURADOV

Date of birth: 24th May 2000

Date and place of arrest: On 13th August 2018, in the court room of Sayat District Court

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: on 13th August, in he Sayat District Court, he was sentenced to one year in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Statement of defendant: He is preparing an appeal against his conviction to Lebap Regional Court.

Place of detention: He was taken to the LB-D/9 detention centre in the city of Turkmenabad.

Other information: An appeal is in preparation to Labab Regional Court.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2402

Arslan BEGENCHOVICH BEGENJOV

Date of Birth: 15th May 1999

Date and place of arrest: On 2nd January 2018 in Lebap, Eastern Turkmenistan

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First Court decision: On 17th January 2018 he was sentenced to one year imprisonment in an ordinary labour camp; appeal was denied.

Address of Prison: 746222 Lebap velayat, Seydi, uchr. LB-K/12, Turkmenistan

Other information: In December 2014 he was also sentenced two years imprisonment and a fee of twenty percent of his salary for on the same grounds.

Sources: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2363

<https://bit.ly/2Lp3Tvi>

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2363

Veniamin GENJIYEV

Date of birth: 12th May 2000

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 6th July 2018 in the Danev District court in Lebap region he was given pretrial detention.

Second court decision: On 17th July in the Danew District Court he was sentenced to one year in prison in ordinary regime labour camp.

Address of Prison: Lebab Regional Investigation Prison in the regional capital Turkmenabad, LB-D/9, Turkmenistan

Other information: It is likely he will be transferred to the Seydi Labour Camp (LB-k/12) in the Lebab Region.

Sources: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2400

Bahram HEMDEMOV

Age: 53 years old

Date and place of arrest: On 14th March 2015, in Turkmenabad

Charges: Fomenting of social, national or religious strife

Statement of the defendant: He claims he hosted a religious meeting.

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177 (Establishes criminal responsibility for incitement to social, ethnic or religious hatred where the acts are intended to incite racial hatred or discord, or to promote exclusiveness or inferiority of citizens on the basis of racial origin. The article establishes more severe penalties where such acts are committed with the use of mass media, or the use or threat of physical violence, or in the context of an organized group)

First court decision: On 19th May 2015, he was sentenced to four years in a labor camp by the Lebab Region Court.

Last court decision: On 25th August 2015, the Supreme Court denied an appeal by his attorney.

Place of detention: LB-K 12 Seydi Labour Camp

Other information: HEMDEMOV has been tortured. Along with him, his son Serdar was jailed for 15 days and tortured. In February 2016, the government of Turkmenistan declared an amnesty that set free hundreds of prisoners but did not release Bahram HEMDEMOV. On August 15, 2016, Mr. HEMDEMOV's attorney filed a complaint on his behalf with the UN Human Rights Committee. He was tortured during his arrest.

Address of Prison: 746222 Lebab velayat, Seydi, uchr. LB-K/12, Turkmenistan

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2063

<https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2015/sca/256321.htm>

<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5704bd904.html>

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2164

Maksat Jimadurdiyevich JUMADURDIYEV

Date of birth: 15th May 2000

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 17th July 2018 in the Danev District court in Lebap region he was sentenced to one year in prison in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Address of Prison: Lebap Regional Investigation Prison in the regional capital Turkmenabad, LB-D/9, Turkmenistan

Other information: It is likely he will be transferred to the Seydi Labour Camp (LB-k/12) in the Lebap Region.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2400

Kerven KAKABAYEV

Date of birth: 9th September 1996

Date and place of arrest: On 28th January 2018, Dashoguz region

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 29th January 2018 he was sentenced to one year in prison in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Place of detention: Seyedi Labour camp in Eastern Lebap Region.

Address of Prison: 746222 Lebap velayat, Seydi, uchr. LB-K/12, Turkmenistan

Sources: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2363

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2363

Ikhlosbek Valijon oglu ROZMETOV

Date of birth: 26th November 1997

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 11th July 2018 in the Gurbansoltan eje District Court he was sentenced to one year in prison in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Other information: Turkmenistan has compulsory military service.

Place of detention: Dashoguz Regional Investigation Prison, DZ-D/7

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2400

Isa SAYAYEV

Date of birth: 14th May 1994

Date and place of arrest: On 9th August, in the Koneurgench City Court room

Charges: Refusing to perform compulsory military service on grounds of religious conscience.

Article of criminal / civil / administrative code: Article 219, Part 1.

First court decision: On 9th August 2018, in the Koneurgench City Court, he was sentenced to one year in an ordinary regime labour camp.

Statement of defendant: On 13th August he lodged an appeal against his conviction to Dashoguz Regional Court.

Place of detention: He was taken to the DZ-D/7 detention centre in Dashoguz.

Other information: An appeal is lodged to Dashguz Regional Court.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2402

Said Nursi Sunni Muslims

Besides the ones mentioned below, other Muslims have also been arrested and jailed for meeting to study their faith and pray, including more than 100 Muslims in and around the eastern city of Turkmenabad. They had participated in an informal Sunni Muslim study group led by Bahram Saparov. Saparov and 19 others were arrested in March 2013 and sentenced to long prison terms in May 2013, and it is unclear whether he and others are still alive

(see http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2218). Further large groups of Muslims were sentenced at subsequent closed trials. Most or all of these prisoners of conscience are thought to be held in Ovadan-Depe Prison, with relatives not knowing if they are still alive. Some have died because of torture or other reasons (see

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2249). Most or all of the more than 100 Muslim prisoners of conscience from in and around Turkmenabad are thought to be held in Ovadan-Depe Prison, with little information as to their conditions, or even as to whether they are still alive. At least three of these prisoners of conscience have died in Ovadan-Depe prison of illness, starvation, neglect, or torture. Lukman Yaylanov died in summer 2016, possibly as a result of torture, and Narkuly Baltayev several months later. Aziz Gafurov died in summer 2017. Gafurov's thin body was covered in bruises when returned to relatives (see F18News 27 September 2017 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2318).

Annamurad Nurmammedovich ATDAEV

Date of birth: On 17th July 1986 in Arzuv village of Gyavers District of Ahal Province

Date and place of arrest: On 27th September 2016

Charges: Administrative offense (minor hooliganism), and later charged with criminal involvement in an extremist Islamic group

Statement of the defendant: He denies the charges

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code: Criminal Code Article 174, Part 1 (Conspiracy to seize power), Article 175, Part 2 (Calls to violent change of the constitutional order), Article 177, Part 1 (Inciting social, ethnic or religious hatred), and Article 275, Part 1 (Creating an organised criminal group).

First court decision: He was sentenced to fifteen days imprisonment. Two new fifteen-day sentences were then handed down.

Last court decision: On 13th December 2016, he was sentenced to a fifteen-year strict regime prison term by the Ashgabad City Court.

Place of detention: Unknown

Other information: Atdaev was denied a lawyer of his choice, only being provided with a state lawyer. His trial was closed. Since January 2017, Atdaev has 'disappeared' (his location is unknown). He was arrested after returning to Turkmenistan to renew his passport from Egypt, where he was studying Islam at Al-Azhar University. As Atdaev had an old-style Turkmen passport whose validity was annulled when new passports were introduced, he was required to return to Turkmenistan which he had not visited since 2008. While in Egypt he married a Russian convert to Islam, Daria, and they have two young children.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2318, <http://provetherearealive.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/List-of-the-disappeared-in-TM-prisons-Prove-Sept-2017-eng.pdf>

Bergejik BEGEJIKOV

Date of birth: 23rd January 1963

Date and place of arrest: 17th June 2017 in Balkanabad

Charges: Criminal activity as adherents of the ideology of Nurjylar religious sect, having created an organized criminal group and participating in the activity of the afore-mentioned criminal structures with the aim of inciting ethnic, religious or other social hatred.

Articles of criminal / civil / administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177, Part 3 punishes "Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred with the use or threat of physical violence , or conducted by an organised group" with prison terms of between three and eight years. Criminal Code Article 275, Part 2 punishes "Participation in the activity of criminal structures" with prison terms of between five and 12 years with confiscation of property. Criminal Code Article 275.1, Part 2 punishes "Storage or distribution of property of criminal structures and planning the financing of them" with prison terms of between five and 10 years with confiscation of property.

First court decision: On 15th August 2017 judge Ogulbayram BAYRAMOWA of the Balkan Regional Court in Balkanabad sentenced him to twelve years in prison in a strict regime labor camp.

Last court decision: On 11th July 2018 the court upheld the first court decision of twelve years in prison.

Address of Ovadan-Depe Prison: Ahal velayat, Upravlenie politsii Ahalskogo velayata, uchr. AH-T/2, Turkmenistan

Other information: He was arrested in a period where four other men were arrested (Jumanazar HOJAMBETOV, Ahmet Bayramberdiyew MAMMETURDYEW, Meret OWEZOW, and Myratdurdy SHAMYRADOV). Although the first court decision demanded them to be held in a strict regime labor camp, four of the men were transferred to the much harsher Ovadan-Depe prison.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2393

Jumanazar HOJAMBETOW

Date of birth: 17th April 1981

Date and place of arrest: 18th May 2017 in Balkanabad

Charges: Criminal activity as adherents of the ideology of Nurjylar religious sect, having created an organized criminal group and participating in the activity of the afore-mentioned criminal structures with the aim of inciting ethnic, religious or other social hatred.

Articles of criminal / civil / administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177, Part 3 punishes "Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred with the use or threat of physical violence , or conducted by an organised group" with prison terms of between three and eight years. Criminal Code Article 275, Part 2 punishes "Participation in the activity of criminal structures" with prison terms of between five and 12 years with confiscation of property. Criminal Code Article 275.1, Part 2 punishes "Storage or distribution of property of criminal structures and planning the financing of them" with prison terms of between five and 10 years with confiscation of property.

First court decision: On 15th August 2017 judge Ogulbayram BAYRAMOWA of the Balkan Regional Court in Balkanabad sentenced him to twelve years in prison in a strict regime labor camp.

Last court decision: On 11th July 2018 the court upheld the first court decision of twelve years in prison.

Address of Ovadan-Depe Prison: Ahal velayat, Upravlenie politsii Ahalskogo velayata, uchr. AH-T/2, Turkmenistan

Other information: He was arrested in a period where four other men were arrested (Bergejijk BERGEJIKOV, Ahmet Bayramberdiyew MAMMETURDYEW, Meret OWEZOW, and Myratdurdy SHAMYRADOV). Although the first court decision demanded them to be held in a strict regime labor camp, four of the men were transferred to the much harsher Ovadan-Depe prison.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2393

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2399

Ahmet Bayramberdiyew MAMMETURDYEW

Date of birth: 13th August 1978

Date and place of arrest: 17th June 2017 in Balkanabad

Charges: Criminal activity as adherents of the ideology of Nurjylar religious sect, having created an organized criminal group and participating in the activity of the afore-mentioned criminal structures with the aim of inciting ethnic, religious or other social hatred.

Articles of criminal / civil / administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177, Part 3 punishes "Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred with the use or threat of physical violence , or conducted by an organised group" with prison terms of between three and eight years. Criminal Code Article 275, Part 2 punishes "Participation in the activity of criminal structures" with prison terms of between five and 12 years with confiscation of property. Criminal Code Article 275.1, Part 2 punishes "Storage or distribution of property of criminal structures and planning the financing of them" with prison terms of between five and 10 years with confiscation of property.

First court decision: On 15th August 2017 judge Ogulbayram BAYRAMOWA of the Balkan Regional Court in Balkanabad sentenced him to twelve years in prison in a strict regime labor camp.

Last court decision: On 11th July 2018 the court upheld the first court decision of twelve years in prison.

Address of Ovadan-Depe Prison: Ahal velayat, Upravlenie politsii Ahalskogo velayata, uchr. AH-T/2, Turkmenistan

Other information: He was arrested in a period where four other men were arrested (Jumanazar HOJAMBETOV, Bergejijk BERGEJIKOV, Meret OWEZOW, and Myratdurdy SHAMYRADOV). Although the first court decision demanded them to be held in a strict regime labor camp, four of the men were transferred to the much harsher Ovadan-Depe prison.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2393

Meret OWEZOW

Date of birth: 16th February 1960

Date of arrest: On 27th June 2017

Charges: Criminal activity as adherents of the ideology of Nurjylar religious sect, having created an organized criminal group and participating in the activity of the afore-mentioned criminal structures with the aim of inciting ethnic, religious or other social hatred.

Articles of criminal / civil / administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177, Part 3 punishes "Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred with the use or threat of physical violence , or conducted by an organised group" with prison terms of between three and eight years. Criminal Code Article 275, Part 2 punishes "Participation in the activity of criminal structures" with prison terms of between five and 12 years with confiscation of property. Criminal Code Article 275.1,

Part 2 punishes "Storage or distribution of property of criminal structures and planning the financing of them" with prison terms of between five and 10 years with confiscation of property.

First court decision: On 15th August 2017 judge Ogulbayram BAYRAMOWA of the Balkan Regional Court in Balkanabad sentenced him to twelve years in prison in a strict regime labor camp.

Last court decision: On 11th July 2018 the court upheld the first court decision of twelve years in prison.

Address of Ovadan-Depe Prison: Ahal velayat, Upravlenie politsii Ahalskogo velayata, uchr. AH-T/2, Turkmenistan

Other information: He was arrested in a period where four other men were arrested (Jumanazar HOJAMBETOV, Bergejijk BERGEJIKOV, Ahmet Bayramberdiyew MAMMETURDYEW, and Myratdurdy SHAMYRADOV). Although the first court decision demanded them to be held in a strict regime labor camp, four of the men were transferred to the much harsher Ovadan-Depe prison.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2393

Collective Arrest

The authorities arrested more than 100 Muslims in and around the eastern city of Turkmenabad who had participated in an informal Sunni Muslim study group led by Bahram Saparov. Saparov and 19 others were arrested in March 2013 and sentenced to long prison terms in May 2013. After the first group was tried and sentenced to long terms, further large groups were sentenced at closed trials.

Bahram SAPAROV and 19 others

Age: 35 years

Place of residence: Turkmenabad

Date and place of arrest: In March 2013, in Turkmenabad

Charges: Wahhabism

Article of the criminal/civil/administrative code: Criminal Code Article 174, Part 1 (Conspiracy to seize power), Article 175, Part 2 (Calls to violent change of the constitutional order), Article 177, Part 3 (Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred), Article 275, Parts 1 and 2 (Creation of an organised group, criminal association or other criminal structures or participation in their activity) and Article 291 (Theft of extortion of weapons, military material, explosive substances and explosive devices". This last charge was subject to Article 14, which covers cases where an individual did not manage to carry out the crime through circumstances that did not depend on themselves.

First court decision: On 22nd May 2013, SAPAROV was sentenced to a long prison term by the Lebap Regional Court in Turkmenabad. The Judge sentenced twenty of the Muslims to long prison terms. One was acquitted and released.

Last court decision: On 24th November 2016, SAPAROV was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. The sentences the others received are unknown.

Place of detention: Top-security Ovadan-Depe Prison, in the Karakum Desert 70 kilometres (45 miles) north of the capital Ashgabat [Ashgabat]

Other information: SAPAROV was arrested alongside Mekan Nurmamedovich JOMARTOV, Lukman YAYLANOV, Agamamet Meretgulyevich GAIPOV, Yusup Atajanovich AKYYEV, Azamat Charyevich KURBANOV, Tahir Sharipovich DAVLETOV, Babajan Dovletdurdyevich KADYROV, Maylis Muhammedovich MEJIDOV, Allaberdi Maratovich KURBANOV, Umarkuly Dovrankulyevich JUMASHOV, Hasan Saburbayevich YUSUPOV, Mansur Ishanmuradovich ISLAMOV, Guvanch Myradovich GURBANOV, Dovletmyrat Kakyshovich AHIPOV, Nuritdin Kamilovich JURAYEV, Atajan Imitjanovich RAIMOV, Ahmet Ergeshevich MIRZAYEV, Sultan Ahmetovich BEBITOV and Adylbek Erkinovich ATAJANOV. Lukman YAYLANOV died in summer 2016, possibly as a result of torture. Narkuly BALTAYEV died several months later. Aziz GAFUROV died in the summer 2017.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2218

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2249

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2244

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2318

Myratdurdy SHAMYRADOW

Date of birth: 7th May 1973

Date and place of arrest: 27th June 2017

Charges: Criminal activity as adherents of the ideology of Nurjylar religious sect, having created an organized criminal group and participating in the activity of the afore-mentioned criminal structures with the aim of inciting ethnic, religious or other social hatred.

Articles of criminal / civil / administrative code: Criminal Code Article 177, Part 3 punishes "Incitement of social, ethnic or religious hatred with the use or threat of physical violence, or conducted by an organised group" with prison terms of between three and eight years. Criminal Code Article 275, Part 2 punishes "Participation in the activity of criminal structures" with prison terms of between five and 12 years with confiscation of property. Criminal Code Article 275.1, Part 2 punishes "Storage or distribution of property of criminal structures and planning the financing of them" with prison terms of between five and 10 years with confiscation of property.

First court decision: On 15th August 2017 judge Ogulbayram BAYRAMOWA of the Balkan Regional Court in Balkanabad sentenced him to twelve years in prison in a strict regime labor camp.

Last court decision: On 11th July 2018 the court upheld the first court decision of twelve years in prison.

Address of Ovadan-Depe Prison: Ahal velayat, Upravlenie politsii Ahalskogo velayata, uchr. AH-T/2, Turkmenistan

Other information: He was arrested in a period where four other men were arrested (Jumanazar HOJAMBETOV, Bergejjik BERGEJIKOV, Ahmet Bayramberdiyew MAMMETURDYEW, and Meret OWEZOW). Although the first court decision demanded them to be held in a strict regime labor camp, four of the men were transferred to the much harsher Ovadan-Depe prison.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2393