

## Taliban in Afghanistan - Beard Shaving in Uzbekistan

### News:

In the city of Yangiyul, Tashkent region, on the 22th of November dozens of men were summoned to the police department, where their beards were forcibly shaved off. Activists reported that raids on men with beards have recently increased in the region. This is reported by the Uzbek media outlets.

One local activist said 22 men had their beards shaved in Yangiyul over the past month. **“Only men who observe religion are forced to shave off their beards. In a conversation with me, many say that this event is regular. That is, I want to say that the forced shaving of beards did not start yesterday”**, - said a local activist.

### Comment:

As usual, law enforcement agencies in Tashkent region denied reports of forced shaving of beards by observers, telling reporters that law enforcement officials could have asked men to fix their beards, but no one forced them to shave their beards.

However, men whos beards were shaved give another information. **“There are men who grow beards because of fashion. Nobody touches them, law enforcement officers find fault only with those who observe religion. They say that we seem to them to be terrorists. We wear beards, as this is considered the sunnah of our prophet”**, - said one of the residents of Yangiyul.

The Muslim board of Uzbekistan declined to comment on the issue of raids against beards, noting that this is not within their competence.

**“We can answer questions regarding actions that spoil the prayer, or in which cases a person can read the Koran, and in which not. If you have a question about growing beards, you should contact the Committee for Religious Affairs”**, - a representative of the department told to journalists.

Information about such cases is periodically leaked to the media. For example, in early June, in the city of Angren, Tashkent region, dozens of men were also summoned to the internal affairs department, where they were forcibly shaved off their beards. Observers note that Uzbek law enforcement agencies periodically organize such events in order to slow down the rapid pace of Islamization of Uzbek society, which resumed immediately after Karimov's death.

It is important to note that after the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, the Uzbek authorities became even more fearful of the influence of Islamic political ideas on Uzbek society. In this regard, in recent months we can fix an increase in pressure on observant residents of the country to such an extent that many have begun to recall the times of the rule of Karimov.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Muhammad Mansour