

Tyrant Rahmon's Prisons became Madrassas for Tajikistan's Muslims

News:

On 2 May, Radio Liberty news agency published an article stating that: *"Tajikistan has launched a programme for the rehabilitation and integration of those convicted on extremism charges. Its necessity is explained by the large number of those convicted on such charges. But, as practice shows, many of those serving time on such charges did not pose a threat to society before they were behind bars."*

According to official documents, the programme aims to return those convicted of extremism to 'a full life in society'. To this end, the programme intends to introduce a range of activities in correctional institutions, from psychological counselling to craft workshops, cultural events and prison psychology courses.

The five-year initiative has a budget of about \$3.6 million. It is reported that it will be financed from the state exchequer and extra-budgetary sources, including donor funds.

'The programme will help inmates get rid of destructive beliefs and prepare for their return to society,' Tajikistan's Main Department for the Execution of Criminal Punishments (MDECP) said."

Comment:

The repressive regime of the tyrant E. Rahmon is making every effort to alienate the country's Muslims from their religion. There are written and unwritten bans on any manifestation of Islam, both in private life and in society. The authorities have banned women from wearing the hijab and threatened heavy fines, there are restrictions on young people visiting mosques, men are having their beards shaved off, and they have gone so far as to go door-to-door asking what group in Islam their children belong to and what religious literature they study.

Today, when people talk about extremists and radicals, they mean Muslims, and destructive beliefs are Islam. Any violation of the laws established by the tyrant E. Rahmon leads to imprisonment as a consequence. Both sincere Muslims who love Allah and Islam, dawah carriers, and ordinary people far from religion are imprisoned. E. Rahmon, the Pharaoh of modern times, thought that he would win by alienating active Muslims from the society, putting them behind bars, would stop the spread of Islam, but the opposite happened. The tyrant's prisons became the forges of dawah carriers and a place of teaching Islam to ordinary people who fell under the regime's persecution and even criminals began to come under the influence of Islam and Muslims.

In the last few years, the authorities have thrown people in jail, accused of extremism simply for liking or innocuous comments on Islamic content on social media. And it turned out that people who were preoccupied only with worldly affairs, who had no time to think about religion and the problems in the country, had a lot of time to study Islam and find the right solution to the problems in life.

As it is written in the article: *'New prisoners literally in a few days begin to listen to the sermons of convicted "ideological extremists". This is the result of close contact and overloaded colonies,' said Azattyk Asia's interlocutor, who spoke on condition of anonymity.*

Azamat Shambilov, an expert on human rights and prison reform and official representative of the International Penitentiary and Criminal Justice Foundation in CIS countries (IPPF), agrees with this view.

'Radicalisation in prisons is a global phenomenon noted in a wide range of countries, especially among vulnerable groups of convicts. Prisons are increasingly becoming 'incubators of radicalisation'. If such people are not supported, they are easy targets for charismatic recruiters,' he said.

Despite all the efforts of the repressive regime to alienate the people from religion, as the Pharaoh E. Rahmon wants, Muslims in prison begin to study Islam in depth, learn the Quran by heart, become experts in Arabic language and fiqh. And the more the tyrant's regime fights Islam and Muslims, the more Islam and Muslims become stronger, realising the evil reality, and strive to revive Islam in life.

Almighty Allah said in His Noble Book: **وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ** **"And when the disbelievers conspired to capture, kill, or exile you. They planned, but Allah also planned. And Allah is the best of planners"** [8:30].

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