

Tajikistan: A Beard with Political Meaning

News:

April 26: The head of the Committee for Youth and Sports Affairs of Tajikistan Abdullo Rakhmonzoda, criticized bearded bloggers at a meeting with local of them and said that ***“the promotion of beards in social networks threatens national security”***. ***“The banned Taliban movement, which overthrew the people's government in Afghanistan, is now actively promoting the beard. And if a young Tajik citizen grows a beard like the Taliban, then this is definitely a kind of gesture of solidarity with them. By growing a beard, they thereby give a signal: they say, come, we accept your ideas, you have supporters here. Thus, we create a threat to our statehood. The beard also has political significance. We need to pay attention to such things for the sake of ensuring national security”***, - the official said.

Comment:

As we can see, Tajik officials have not been shy about publicly expressing aggression against the attributes of Islam for a long time. We already hear insults to Islam, the hijab and mosques from local officials, and from Rahmon himself. The war against Islam by the Rahmon regime is not weakening, but intensifying. So, for example, if earlier the support of the regime by preachers and imams guaranteed them relative safety, now the regime imprisons even those who unquestioningly cooperated with the authorities, but did not do it actively enough.

Recall that Tajikistan has once again been among the 17 states "of particular concern" in terms of religious freedom, according to the annual report on the observance of religious rights in the world by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). In Tajikistan, according to the authors of the report, the situation with freedom of religion remains deplorable: the country's government continues to repress Muslims - children under 18 are prohibited from attending mosques; religious education is impossible, there is an age limit for performing the Hajj, women are forbidden to wear religious clothes, and men are forbidden to grow beards, and since 2014, sermons agreed with the authorities have been read in mosques. Of course, when mentioning this report, one should not forget that all these empty “expressions of concern” by Western human rights activists do not at all prevent the governments of Western countries from cooperating and supporting dictators in the Islamic world, including Rahmon.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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