

Tajik Intelligence Services Have Brought Back 4,000 Students from Abroad

News:

The authorities of Tajikistan have brought back more than 4,000 students from abroad under the pretext of preventing their possible involvement with terrorist organizations. This was announced by the Chairman of the State Committee for National Security (SCNS), Saimumin Yatimov, during a conference in Dushanbe. According to him, these young people had been studying abroad and were under the ideological influence of extremist groups and religious educational institutions whose activities have raised concerns among Tajik security services. ***“In order to prevent their joining such groups, more than 4,000 Tajik students who had been targeted by terrorist organizations and foreign religious educational institutions have been returned to their homeland”***, - Yatimov emphasized.

Comment:

It should be noted that the Tajik regime has been tightly controlling the religious education of young Tajik citizens for the past 15 years. It all began when 2009 was declared the “Year of Imam Abu Hanifa.” Under the pretext of preserving the Hanafi school of thought, repressive measures were introduced against students of religious universities, especially those studying abroad. Within just a few years, all religious educational institutions in the country were shut down, except for the Islamic Institute in Dushanbe, which came under strict government supervision.

Since then, obtaining religious education in Tajikistan has been allowed only in officially recognized institutions and with parental consent. The only functioning institution of this kind remains the Islamic Institute in Dushanbe, which admits a very limited number of students. As a result, there is a severe shortage of qualified personnel in this field. Most independent religious figures and people with religious education have either long since left the country or are serving prison sentences on fabricated criminal charges. The remaining ones are under tight surveillance by the security services.

One of the key pillars of President Rahmon’s domestic policy is preventing any form of religious-political revival, similar to what occurred in the 1990s. Judging by current trends, nothing in this regard is likely to change even after Rahmon’s expected retirement, considering the statements made by his successor. It is worth recalling that in August this year, the Mayor of Dushanbe and Speaker of the Majlisi Milli, Rustam Emomali, during a meeting with representatives of the capital’s law enforcement and judicial bodies, expressed concern about the issue of illegal religious education. ***“Eighty percent of those who have undergone illegal religious training are young people under 30”***, - he said at the time.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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