

Information on the criminal case against A.A. Rizoev

In November 2010, Mr. Abdulmajid Abdullojonovich Rizoev created a Facebook account under the name “Abdulmajid Rizoev”, and in this account he posted information about himself and about his education and work. Presenting himself as an expert in law, politics and economics, he drew 4,920 followers to his account and used the account extensively until 18 November 2020.

A.A. Rizoev, violating Act No. 1655 of 2 January 2020, the Act on Combating Extremism, under which the publication and distribution of printed and other extremist materials on the Internet in Tajikistan is considered extremist activity, posted comments on Facebook that cast doubt on the results of the 1 March 2020 elections to the Majlisi namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli (the lower chamber of the parliament) of Tajikistan, as well as other materials of an extremist nature.

In particular, A.A. Rizoev posted the following comments to his account: “You are in deep trouble. Now at least the people are busy with the Internet”, “Stop putting up with the Government and officials”, “The wise Government fights the causes of the protests, the stupid one fights the protesters”, “1. The people must live well. 2. The people must live. 3. The people must. We, the Tajik people, are at stage No. 3. Incredible”, “A brother said that the elections were unnecessary expenses. What do you think?”, “Participation in the elections is a sign of political intelligence. Anyone who didn’t participate in the elections lacks political intelligence”, “I, too, got involved; I took a little survey. Here are the results: 25 per cent voted, 75 per cent did not” and so on. With these illegal actions, he made a public call for extremist activities.

The conclusion of the forensic and technological investigation is that the comments and other posts on Abdulmajid Rizoev’s Facebook page contain public calls for extremist activities aiming at undermining the constitutional order of Tajikistan.

On 18 November 2020, the Prosecutor General’s Office of Tajikistan instituted criminal proceedings against A.A. Rizoev under part 2 of article 307 (1) (public calls for extremist activities and public justification of extremism) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Tajikistan.

On 14 June 2021, the Shokhmansur District Court of Dushanbe returned a verdict in which A.A. Rizoev was found guilty under part 2 of article 307 (1) of the Tajik Criminal Code and sentenced to 5 years and 6 months in a high-security correctional facility.

We also note that on the basis of a letter of the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan dated 30 April 2021, A.A. Rizoev is not a practising lawyer.