

02

Jan
2019
▲ Lvl. 1

No state
reply yet

Azerbaijan

Alert created on: 08 Dec 2016

Azerbaijani Journalist Ikram Rahimov Sentenced to One Year in Jail on Libel Charges

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

👉 1 Journalist in detention

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Detention and
imprisonment of journalists

NO STATE REPLY YET

PARTNER: Article 19, CPJ, EFJ/IFJ, Index, RSF

On 25 November 2016, Sumgayit City Court sentenced Ikram Rahimov, Editor-in-Chief of online news website realliq.info, along with another individual, Rahman Novruzov, to one year in jail. Both men were convicted under Article 147.2 (libel that involves accusing someone of a serious or especially serious crime) of the Criminal Code of Azerbaijan. The conviction followed a criminal investigation into libel, launched against both persons after Rahimov published an online article about bribery and tax evasion by local authorities, based on information provided by Novruzov.

After being convicted, Rahimov was transferred to the Sumqayit Police Department, where he was held incommunicado and allegedly subjected to torture for three days. According to Rahimov's lawyer, the police demanded that Rahimov apologise on camera to one of the individuals mentioned in the article for which he was convicted. After Rahimov refused to do so, they allegedly tortured him and subjected him to cruel and degrading treatment, resulting in Rahimov incurring a head injury. Rahimov was then transferred to a Detention Facility, where his lawyer met with him on 30 November 2016.

Rahimov's lawyer plans to appeal to the Prosecutor General's Office regarding the torture allegations.

UPDATES

02 Jan 2019: On 26 October 2018, police detained Ikram Rahimov and the following day, a Baku district court judge charged him with extortion, ruling that he should remain in detention pending investigation. On 1 November 2018, a Baku court of appeals denied Rahimov's appeal to be released on bail. Azerbaijan's security service stated that Rahimov's arrest was based on "numerous complaints" from citizens. The statement alleged that Rahimov and his

"subordinates" created Realliq and other "extortionist" websites to collect compromising information about individuals and threaten them with publishing "slandorous" articles. Emin Rahimov, the journalist's brother, told CPJ that he believed the charges were in retaliation for an editorial that Ikram Rahimov published on his website a few hours before the arrest. In the editorial written as a letter to Ali Hasanov, a presidential adviser who oversees media, Realliq's editor addressed several issues, including alleged corruption in the country's Press Council, a government body. He wrote that "thousands of manats (Azerbaijani currency) allocated by the government to mass media have not been spent as planned.

- ➔ [Azerbaijan's security service statement](#)
- ➔ [News report from Kavkazsky Uzel: "Суд в Баку оставил главреда Икрама Рагимова под арестом"](#)
- ➔ [CPJ Prison Census Report on Ikram Rahimov's case](#)

01 Mar 2017: On 1 March 2017 both Ikram Rahimov and Rahman Novruzov were released during the appeal hearing.

- ➔ [Article published by the Institute for Reporters Freedom and Safety \(IRFS\): "Journalist Ikram Rahimov Released from Jail"](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ➔ [Profile of Ikram Rahimov on Azerbaijan Free Expression Platform](#)
- ➔ [CPJ's 2018 annual report on jailed journalists: Ikram Rahimov](#)

JOURNALISTS IN DETENTION

Currently in detention (1):

Ikram Rahimov