



Yaqub Sharafat

Journalist and Civil Activist

Date of Birth: January 9, 1996

Date of Assassination: October 17, 2016

Place of Assassination: Zabul Province

Individual/Group Responsible for the Assassination: Unknown Group

Life and Education

Yaqub Sharafat was born in Zabul Province into a deeply religious family. His father was strongly opposed to the media and civil activities and was also strongly against girls attending school. Sharafat graduated from Sheikh Mati Baba High School but could not attend university due to severe economic hardships, thus failing to achieve his dream of studying journalism. However, he actively participated in short-term journalism courses and legal awareness and cultural programs.

Activities

Sharafat conducted his media activities openly but had to keep his human rights work secret due to various reasons, including security concerns. As a result, his contributions to civil society in Zabul remained unrecognized and unappreciated. He was often reprimanded for publishing news related to women's rights violations and was even forced to remove some of his reports. Sharafat faced numerous challenges, including economic difficulties and threats from the Taliban and unknown individuals. He was also a prominent writer and had worked for local radio stations in Zabul.

The following highlights some of Yaqub Sharafat's activities:

- Official journalist for Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA)
- Led campaigns encouraging girls to write articles and participate in radio and media programs
- Collaborated with the Zabul Directorate of Women's Affairs to organize legal awareness programs; successfully implemented over 27 such programs from 2013 to the end of 2015
- Traveled to Atghar, Shinkay, and Suri districts in Zabul to promote girls' education

Challenges During Her Activism

- Assaulted by unknown individuals in 2012
- Received threats and warning messages from unknown numbers
- Imprisoned for 17 hours by the Taliban in Shajoy District

Awards and Honors

Sharafat's activities were praised by the provincial authorities, the Directorate of Information and Culture of Zabul, and the Directorate of Women's Affairs of Zabul, but he never received national or international recognition. According to his wife, Sharafat had aspired to win a peace prize.

Memories and Quotes

A close colleague and friend of Sharafat recalls that he believed in initiating his activism at home, advocating for his sisters' education and persuading his family of his media and other involvements before extending his efforts further. This friend fondly remembers their subsequent meeting when Sharafat had just commenced his work at the local radio station, Qalat Zhagh.

Aspirations and Goals

According to his family, Sharafat's greatest wish was to carry out his human rights activities openly and freely. Unfortunately, he had to work in secrecy until his last moments, with only his wife, close friends, and the Directorate of Women's Affairs knowing about his activities. Another of his dreams was to have a radio-television network to broadcast awareness programs. His wife said that Sharafat had written about this dream in his diary.

Reactions to the Assassination

At 6 PM on a Sunday in 2016, while Sharafat and his wife were heading to a doctor's appointment, he was shot dead by unknown assailants in front of his wife. Besides condolence messages from senior officials in Zabul and Kabul, there was no significant reaction to Sharafat's assassination. At that time, people in Zabul were too afraid to protest for their rights or seek justice, and therefore, there was no notable reaction to Sharafat's death.

Links

Here are some of the links to the news about the assassination of Yaqub Sharafat:

1. <https://www.nunn.asia/6585/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%DB%8C%D8%B9%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A8-%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AA-%D8%8C-%DA%98%D9%85%D9%86-%DA%98%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B9/amp/>
2. <https://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan-37675593>

Case Status

The perpetrators of this case remained unknown. Despite investigations by the police and the National Directorate of Security, the culprits were never identified. Ultimately, the case was closed, and Sharafat's family did not reopen it due to excessive threats.