



Fereshta Kohistani

Women's Rights Activist

Date of Birth: 1991

Date of Assassination: December 24, 2020

Place of Assassination: Kapisa Province

Person/Group Responsible for Assassination: Unknown

Life and Education

Fereshta Kohistani was born in 1991 in Kapisa and graduated from a university in Delhi, India. She was a prominent women's rights activist. On December 24, 2020, due to her activism, she was assassinated by unidentified gunmen in Kapisa. Her brother, Shahram Kohistani, who was accompanying her at the time, was also killed in the attack. Her assassination sparked widespread reactions and protests among human rights activists and the international community, drawing attention to the deteriorating situation of human rights defenders in Afghanistan. Notably, just a day before her assassination, Mohammad Yousuf Rasheed, a civil society activist and head of the Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA), was also assassinated. Kohistani is survived by a son.

Activities

Fereshta Kohistani was one of Afghanistan's leading women's rights activists. She also worked as an advisor to the Executive Office. Her efforts were primarily focused on advancing women's and girls' rights, with her vision of a society free from violence and discrimination. Kohistani headed the Kapisa Women's Movement and was a senior and active member of the Kapisa Youth Organization. She conducted extensive awareness campaigns and educational programs for women, especially in the underprivileged areas of Kapisa. One of her key initiatives was advocating for improving the rights of women in deprived and remote regions. She actively fought against gender-based violence, forced marriages, and gender discrimination. Kohistani used social media and other media platforms to convey her message to the public and participated in various human rights campaigns, becoming a prominent voice for women standing up against injustice.

Challenges During Her Activism

Due to her outspoken advocacy for women's rights, Kohistani frequently received threats. She spoke about these threats on numerous occasions, and just days before her assassination, she posted on Facebook, mentioning these threats and calling on authorities to take action regarding her safety. One of her close friends mentioned that just three days before her assassination, Kohistani discussed the threatening calls and messages she had been receiving.

Memories and Quotes

One of Mrs. Kohistani's statements in Facebook



Photos / Notes

Fereshta Kohistani's Facebook note a few days before her assassination



Freshta Kohistani

11 December 2020 · 🌐



دیر زمان می شود روزگار خوشی ندارم، زندگی به کامم تلخ گشته و لحظاتم را با ترس و اضطراب سپری می کنم، چندین بار از وزارت داخله، از شخص وزیر صاحب، از رئیس مبارزه با جرایم از رئیس تحقیقات جنایی از رئیس صاحب امنیت ملی خواهش کردم که سخت زیر تهدیدات هستم توجه کنید اما بی اعتنائی نمودند، من جوان ترس و اضطراب نیستم، ترس من از آینده خانواده ام از همکارانم است که بعد من بی سرنوشت می مانند و درین خرابکده چی خواهند کرد؟ از مسوولین عزیز یکبار دیگر خواهش میکنم موضوع من را جدی بگیرند، در غیر آن هر عواقب بدی و خونم در گردن همان هایی است که بااینکه میدانند چقدر در تهدید و مشکلات امنیتی ام اما بی توجهی کردند.

هیچ چیز فراقانونی نه خواسته ام و نمی خواهم و هرگز از همین وطن هم جایی نمی روم، صرف بحیث یک شهروند که در خطریم ازمن محافظت کنند، حالا که وزارت داخله، امنیت ملی بی مهری نمودند، از آقای صالح، و سایر بزرگان کشور خواهشمندم توجه کنند.

Aspirations and Goals

Kohistani was passionately committed to improving the legal and social status of women in Afghanistan. She was particularly active in combating violence against women and advocating for their right to education and employment. One of her main goals was to educate and raise awareness among women and girls in underprivileged and rural areas, empowering them to understand their rights and to stand up for themselves. She also fought against gender discrimination in Afghan society, advocating for gender equality across all levels. Kohistani aimed to challenge the traditional and conservative attitudes that were barriers to women's progress.

Reactions to the Assassination

The Ministry of Interior, as well as police commands in Kabul and Kapisa, confirmed her assassination and pledged to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice. According to Deutsche Welle, former President Hamid Karzai stated, "Fereshta Kohistani was one of the brave civil activists who always played a prominent and active role in seeking justice and defending the civil rights of Afghan citizens." Abdullah Abdullah also described her as "a brave, free-spirited, and fearless young woman who was always at the forefront of the civil and social struggle."

Links

Here are some of the links to the news about the assassination of Fereshta Kohistani:

1. BBC Report:

<https://www.bbc.com/persian/arts-55438950.amp>

2. Tolo News Report:

<https://tolonews.com/fa/afghanistan-168734>

3. Ariana News Report:

<https://www.ariananews.af/fa/%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%9B-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%B4%D8%AA%D9%87-%DA%A9%D9%88%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C/>

4. Deutsche Welle Report:

<https://www.dw.com/fa-ir/%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%B4%D8%AA%D9%87%DA%A9%D9%88%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%81%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%88%D9%82%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%B4%D8%AF/a-56054866>

Case Status

Although Ariana News reported that the individuals responsible for Kohistani's assassination were arrested after returning from Peshawar, Kohistani's family, according to one of her friends, denies this claim, stating that her killers have not yet been apprehended.