



Nematullah Zaheer

Journalist

Date of Birth: 1978

Date of Assassination: November 4, 2016

Place of Assassination: Helmand Province

Person/Group Responsible for Assassination: The Taliban

Life and Education

In a special program aired by Ariana Television Network to honor Nematullah Zaheer, it was mentioned that he was born in Sayedabad District of Maidan Wardak Province. He began his primary education in 1986 at Sayedabad District High School and graduated in 1998. Zaheer continued his studies and in 1999 enrolled in the Faculty of Journalism at Kabul University, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2003.

According to Ariana Television, Zaheer and a group of journalists traveled to the Sur Gudar (Sorkh-Gozar) area of Lashkar Gah's second district—a region recently cleared of Taliban forces—to cover the operations of Afghan troops. Tragically, his vehicle struck a landmine, leading to his assassination. Zaheer is survived by three sons and one daughter.

Activities

Nematullah Zaheer was recognized as a skilled and dedicated journalist, as reported by Ariana News. His first professional experiences began in his early teens with involvement in civil activities. He later joined the journalism field, tirelessly working to document the intense conflict in Helmand and the struggles of its residents. His commitment to delivering news was so strong that he chose Helmand—one of the most dangerous provinces—as his primary reporting area. Zaheer was regarded as one of Afghanistan’s talented and diligent journalists, working with various media outlets for over a decade.

Challenges During His Activism

As a journalist reporting from one of the country's most dangerous regions, security threats were a constant challenge for Zaheer. Ultimately, he lost his life while reporting from a dangerous region.

Awards and Honors

During his career, Zaheer received numerous commendations from government bodies and journalist support organizations for his work.

Memories and Quotes

Ariana News highlighted Zaheer's last Facebook post, where he wrote: "Our children in Kunduz are being killed in airstrikes, and in Helmand, they are falling victim to landmines. This is all caused by us. We should not complain because we have brought these uninvited guests ourselves. They watch while we fight among ourselves."

Tolo News also shared Zaheer's last words, spoken just minutes before his assassination: "We are heading to the Sur Gudar area of Lashkar Gah to see what's happening there."

Photos / Notes

A photo from Zaheer's Facebook with a note about war and peace



Aspirations and Goals

According to a family member, one of Zaheer's deepest wishes was for peace to be established throughout Maidan Wardak, a province that was highly insecure at the time. His relatives mentioned that he was a strong advocate for education, consistently encouraging his family and relatives to send their children to school. A family member shared that Zaheer was the first in his family to empower his wife with decision-making authority, emphasizing the importance of women's rights. A close friend noted that one of Zaheer's major goals was to establish a journalism study center in Wardak, but terrorism cut his life short before he could achieve this dream.

Reactions to the Assassination

According to Ariana News, figures such as Ashraf Ghani, Abdullah Abdullah, the National Security Council, and the Independent Human Rights Commission condemned the assassination, offering condolences to Zaheer's family and the Ariana TV Network.

In a statement from the Presidential Palace, Mr. Ghani expressed deep sorrow over Zaheer's assassination, condemning the act and stating: "The terrorists and enemies of Afghanistan have once again shown their disregard for freedom of expression. Their cowardly acts, like the assassination of Nematullah Zaheer, have cast a shadow of grief over the entire media community."

Journalists and civil activists in Balkh Province also condemned Zaheer's assassination. They called for a thorough investigation into the assassination of

Reactions to the Assassination

journalists, urging the government to act. One year after Zaheer's assassination, the Kabul Press Club, an organization supporting journalists in Afghanistan, named an award in his honor to commemorate his sacrifice.

Links

Here are some of the links to the news about the assassination of Nematullah Zaheer:

1. Ariana News Report

ariananews.af/fa/بیکر-خونین-نعمت-الله-زهیر-در-زادگاهش-به

2. Tolo News Report

<https://tolonews.com/index.php/fa/afghanistan/28158-afghan-journalist-killed-in-helmand-blast>

3. BBC News Report

<https://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan-37862300>

4. Pajhwok News Agency Report

<https://pajhwok.com/fa/2016/11/04/خبرنگار-تلویزیون-آریانا-در-هلمند-کشته>

5. VOA Report

<https://www.darivoa.com/a/afghan-journalist-killed-in-helmand-today/3580447.html>

6. Afghan News Report

<http://afghannews.af/از-فرستادن-خبرنگاران-در-خط-مقدم-جنگ-جلوگیری-شود>

7. DW News Report

<https://www.dw.com/ps/به-هلمند-کی-یو-بل-خبريال-وژل-سوی/a-36257443>

Case Status

The case was closed with no further action taken regarding Zaheer's killing beyond issuing statements and expressing condolences.