

Prayer Stopped in Dushanbe because of Putin's Visit

News:

From October 7 to 12, several mosques in Dushanbe will temporarily suspend collective prayers. According to the city's Department of Internal Affairs, the restrictions are being implemented "in connection with important events taking place in the city," referring to the official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Collective prayers will temporarily not be held in the mosques *Mavloni Yaqub Charkhi*, *Sari Osiyo*, *Abu Hanifa*, and *Khoji Ismatullo*. In addition, from October 8 to 12, prayers will also not take place at the *Imam al-Bukhari* mosque.

Notably, on October 7, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in Dushanbe to visit Russian Ministry of Defense military facilities located in Tajikistan. At Dushanbe Airport, Belousov was greeted by Tajikistan's Minister of Defense Emomali Sobirzoda and Chief of the General Staff Bobojon Saidzoda, according to the statement.

Comment:

It is worth recalling that, according to official data, the 201st military base stationed in Tajikistan is Russia's largest military facility outside its borders. It is located in two cities — Dushanbe and Bokhtar. The base includes motorized rifle, tank, artillery, reconnaissance, air defense, chemical, biological, radiological protection, and communications units. In total, the Russian military contingent in Tajikistan numbers around 10,000 troops, whereas the entire national army of Tajikistan comprises only about 9,000 servicemen.

Given all this, Putin's visit appears less like a diplomatic state visit by a foreign leader and more like an inspection by a Russian master of his Central Asian colony. Rahmon does not even try to conceal his servility toward the Russians - unsurprising, since it is Moscow that guarantees the security of his regime.

It is also noteworthy that the suspension of collective prayers in mosques during such events has already become a norm under Rahmon's regime. For instance, in July 2024, Friday prayers in Dushanbe were canceled due to the state visit of Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Clearly, Rahmon seeks to present Tajikistan to his foreign patrons as sterilized of Islam - in other words, just the way they want to see it.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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